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[illegible] should be a bigger issue at elections

SO the public of Kent have spoken and it seems they have not been overly impressed with the performance of our main political parties.

The European elections gave Ukip leader Nigel Farage his greatest moment yet in the spotlight – and indeed many more follow – and we offer our analysis of events elsewhere in this paper.

While many may be dismayed by an apparent swing to the right and the failure of those parties left of centre to engage more fully with the county's populace, there is an issue that yet again did not figure in the election as highly as it might.

That, of course, was the environment.

And there is arguably nowhere in the country where that topic is of greater relevance than here.

With a population density double that of the national average, Kent is already drastically overcrowded – and, with some of the proposals being put forward by our local authorities, it's going to be getting a lot more so. Witness, for example, Canterbury City Council's proposal for 15,600 homes to be built in the district up to 2031. And what, incidentally, happens then? Fifteen thousand more?

At some point, our local politicians, many of them seemingly so development-obsessed, are going to have to say enough is enough.

However, they are only likely to do so if the voters insist upon it.

Which they should do, because the overcrowding of Kent is one of its most critical issues.

Happily, there are still chunks of countryside remaining. One of the most delightful is the south side of the Isle of Sheppey, and in this edition we take a visit to Elmley National Nature Reserve – one of the county's gems in a part of Kent that too many people dismiss.

So, despite the onslaught of development and its attendant apathy, imagined or otherwise, we still have plenty to celebrate. And there is no better time to do it... so get out there and enjoy.

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

Barnes Channel 4 show 'depressingly hilarious'

By Sarah Linney
sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

ANN Barnes, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, has been lambasted after a TV documentary in which she was unable to define her own job.

Viewers described the Channel 4 programme on Twitter as "depressingly hilarious", a "sitcom" and "surely a spoof".

But the programme also showed Mrs Barnes attempting to use her role to recruit more police for Kent by raising council tax, only to be thwarted by the Government.

When asked what the job of a police and crime commissioner was, Mrs Barnes responded: "Oh dear, what's a police commissioner... it's a strange job because there's no job description."

She was shown talking for four hours at a public meeting, during which some people fell asleep, and defending her decision to spend £15,000 on a tour bus with the words "I could have had a top-of-the-range Mercedes, but it's not my image" before being seen driving a soft-top Mercedes.

However, the programme also showed Mrs Barnes introducing herself to people in the street and in the supermarket to ask about their concerns, and bringing about an improvement in Kent Police's crime-recording rate after finding the force was not recording all crime.

SPOTLIGHT: Kent's PCC Ann Barnes was criticised after the TV show

Despite her mishaps, other viewers said she came across as well intentioned and genuine while the programme raised, but did not answer, much bigger questions than any relating to her personally.

The real issues relating to policing in the county, such as under-funding, rising crime rates and lack of police presence, or why the appointment of an £85,000-a-year commissioner was felt to be the best solution to these, were left unaddressed, they said.

KoS made several attempts to contact Mrs Barnes but could not speak to her.

She said in a statement on the Kent Police website: "There are many areas of work where I believe my office has made a real difference.

"We have developed a new Sexual Assault Referral Centre and introduced Track My Crime and mobile police stations. There has been investment in body cameras, and officers will be receiving digital devices to reduce the time they have to spend at the station."

MP welcomes French police action in tearing down migrant campsite

THERE were rowdy scenes when French police in riot gear finally responded to British demands to have the latest immigrant 'shanty town' destroyed.

Health problems were starting to set in among the hundreds of people, many looking to bypass immigration controls and enter the UK, who were removed from the lines of tents in the French seaside town.

It comes after Dover and Deal MP Charlie Elphicke recently visited and demanded the mayor take action.

The MP welcomed the removal of the camp and stressed that he did not want it to return.

Some 800 migrants from Asia, the Middle East and Africa were occupying camps near the port.

The authorities say the evictions are needed to deal with an outbreak of scabies in the camps, where numbers have swelled in recent months.

The migrants have been trying to get to Britain and say they have nowhere else to go after the camps are destroyed. There was a stand-off, but eventually bulldozers moved in and levelled what was left of the site.

One Eritrean man said he had tried to cross the English Channel by boarding lorries but was stopped by police several times.

He told local reporters: "I will try again and again."

Several people have already been killed under the wheels of lorries at the docks, but nightly they continue to board trucks as they approach the port.

It is though the dislodged migrants will be bussed to another camp in northern France as authorities struggle to deal with yet more arriving almost daily.

It was 12 years ago that a Red Cross centre at Sangatte was closed down, leading to the steady development of ramshackle campsites inhabited by people who believe that Britain will welcome them with open arms, if only they can beat the border patrols.

Skull Cracker given life term for robbery during escape

THE man dubbed Skull Cracker has been jailed for life after his latest armed robbery.

Michael Wheatley, 55, admitted at Guildford Crown Court on Thursday robbery, possession of a firearm or imitation firearm and being unlawfully at large.

He will serve a minimum of 10 years.

Wheatley sparked a national manhunt when he absconded from Elmley prison on the Isle of Sheppey, where he was serving time for a string of armed robberies.

After escaping from the prison on Sunday, May 4, he robbed a building society in Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey, three days later.

South African crash leaves ex-Gills player on life support

A FORMER Gillingham footballer is critically ill after a serious car crash while he was on holiday in South Africa.

George Howard, 20, from Rainham, has been on a life-support machine since the crash, which happened on Friday, May 23.

His family are with him.

Mr Howard has been a goalkeeper for Charlton, Bromley and Gillingham football clubs – he joined Gillingham last summer but never made a first-team appearance.

He was released earlier this month from a one-year contract.

Mr Howard's insurance company has reportedly said it will cover the costs of his health care, after his friends and family raised more than £10,000.

Fund-raisers said donations would now go towards helping family members stay in South Africa and towards the cost of Mr Howard's rehabilitation.

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

Fruit-farmer Clive is in the running for award

FARMER Clive Chandler from family-run Chandler and Dunn in Canterbury has made it to the short-list of this year's M&S Farming for the Future awards. He will find out if he has been crowned winner in July.

Chandler and Dunn specialises in growing a variety of tree fruits, including tree-ripe Cox and Conference and Perfect Pick Gala and Braeburn apples. It has been supplying Marks & Spencer for more than 30 years.

The farm has more than 200 years' of industry experience and is providing orchards for three industry-leading research projects in which the environment and efficiency are key themes.

Mr Chandler impressed the judges with this commitment to research and development and his willingness to share knowledge with the wider farming community.

Lydd Airport announces flights to Italy but not all are happy with growth

By Chris Murphy
editorial@archant.co.uk

FOLLOWING the closure of Manston Airport with the loss of some 150 jobs, Lydd Airport has announced an expanded service.

Citing easy links to the M20 and the high-speed rail link at Ashford International, the airport, with a 1,505-metre runway, says it is starting flights to Italy.

Now it has full terminal services including Customs, immigration and even Special Branch, Lydd Airport says there is nothing to stop further expansion. It hopes to attract more executive jets, helicopters and light aircraft and cargo.

The airport, run by FAL Aviation UK, says it now has regular flights to Verona and Naples run by Newmarket Holidays, as well as to Le Touquet in France, operated by LyddAir.

To celebrate the launch of the service last week, Newmarket has offered discounts on selected holidays.

An airport spokesman said the expansion would be good for the county and added: "We're delighted to be welcoming our first Newmarket Holidays passengers.

HIGH HOPES: Lydd Airport

"This is the beginning of a new chapter in Lydd's exciting development and, we hope, the start of a successful partnership with Newmarket Holidays."

There had been a row over the airport's expansion, with campaign groups citing damage to the environment and the potential catastrophe of an aircraft crashing into Dungeness nuclear power station.

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds spokeswoman Sue Royal said: "Not only does increasing flights from Lydd risk potential disturbance to wildlife and its habitat, it also threatens an area that has been frequently praised as one of the most tranquil in the UK, attracting millions of visitors every year and valued by local people.

"The society, our 1.1 million members and many local people were very disappointed with the recent High Court judgement in response to our challenge to the application to expand Lydd Airport.

"We are currently reviewing the outcome of this complex case before we decide what our next steps will be, but we are ruling nothing out."

SAILING AWAY: HMS Bulwark

Flagship joins Royal Marines' 350th birthday

THE flagship of the Royal Navy arrived in Greenwich this week after sailing along the Kent coast.

HMS Bulwark is here for five days, during which it will be supporting activities for the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines.

Her commanding officer, Captain Dean Bassett, said: "I am honoured to have brought HMS Bulwark to Greenwich and the ship's company and I are looking forward to supporting this visit. It will be a pleasure to welcome many guests onboard over the coming days.

"It is a real privilege to play a part in celebrating the achievements of the Royal Marines in their 350th year and to commemorate the critical contribution that our maritime forces played in the strategic success of D-Day."

The huge ship's company is taking part in a series of engagement activities to mark the anniversary of the Royal Marines' formation.

It sets sail once more on Tuesday for Southsea, Portsmouth, where an amphibious beach assault can be watched from the seafront.

After that it will cross the Channel to France, where international ceremonies are being held to mark the enduring spirit of the Allied Forces at D-Day.

£300,000 grant for new flood defences

TONBRIDGE & Malling Borough council leader Nicolas Heslop has welcomed the decision by the Environment Agency to allocate £300,000 towards flood-defence measures.

The move is in response to the flooding experienced in the borough during the winter.

Joint letters from Mr Heslop and Julie Beilby, the council's chief executive, were sent to five Government ministers and the chairman of the Environment Agency in April.

The schemes identified include:

- £80,000 for Avebury Avenue flood defence
- £200,000 to investigate and construct a new bund to reduce flood risk in Hildenborough;
- £100,000 for a Leigh Barrier storage feasibility study previously programmed for 2035

Mr Heslop said: ''This allocation of funds for the schemes identified by the council that require improvement is very welcome.''

Fourteen years in jail for sexual predator

A DOVER man has been jailed for 14 years after being found guilty of sexual offences.

Martin Adams, 55, of Coombe Valley Road, was found guilty at Canterbury Crown Court on Tuesday of two counts of rape, two counts of causing a child to engage in sexual activity and one count of causing a child to watch a sex act.

In addition to his 14-year prison term, he was given a sexual offences prevention order, banning him from working with children, and he will need to sign the sex offenders register.

Detective Constable Emily Hooper, from the police public protection unit, said: ''A common factor in cases like this is that the victim often asks if it is their fault the abuse took place. It is not.

''It is the fault of the offender, who takes advantage of a child too young to understand the gravity of what is happening, and how very wrong it is. Adams completely denied all the allegations that were made but he has been found guilty and now faces a long time in prison.''

Ryder Cup on show at pro-am tournament

THE world-famous Ryder Cup is coming to Kent.

Leeds Castle is hosting a pro-am tournament on Thursday (June 5) and the trophy will be on hand from 2pm-4pm.

Organisers say golf-lovers will find it hard to resist seeing the cup up close and personal.

The Leeds Castle Pro-Am is believed to be the first nine-holes-only contest in this format in the South East, on its par-33, 2,681-yard course, and is being held to celebrate the course's redesign and relaunch.

Its links to the Ryder Cup stretch back to 1935 and 1937, when the US Ryder Cup team stayed there while playing in the event in the UK.

In June's contest, 20 pairs will be made up with one PGA professional and one amateur.

Alan Walker, PGA professional, has been overseeing the redesign of the course. He said: ''Golf equipment and new technology have meant it's become necessary to look at how the course can be updated successfully.''

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agenda

What will make next week's headlines...

City council to reveal plans for next 20 years

CANTERBURY City Council releases its final draft Local Plan for the district on Thursday.

The document will set out the district's priorities for almost 20 years.

In it the authority will be setting out its proposals relating to issues such as employment, housing and transport.

The original draft was released for consultation in June 2013 and proposed a target of 15,600 new homes, a figure that was heavily criticised for being excessively high.

Campaign groups will be hoping the council has lowered its original figures after massive concerns over the level of greenfield development proposed.

The groups had accused the council of allowing unsustainable, environmentally-damaging development in unspoilt areas.

The consultation will run for six weeks, until Friday, July 18.

Hospice site is staying open, says chief exec

THE chief executive of Pilgrims Hospice has refuted claims that the charity's site in London Road, Canterbury, is to be closed.

Steve Auty said:"Our facility in London Road is not closing.

"We will continue to offer day and community services at London Road, as well as education and training for our staff and other healthcare professionals.

"Our inpatient unit at London Road will remain open until we have established Pilgrims supported beds with partner organisations in the Canterbury area."

A petition to keep the site open has attracted more than 17,000 signatures.

...also

Trust's open-air season

THE National Trust has launched its summer season in Kent with a series of open-air theatre and cinema productions.

There is a range of venues holding events, from Shakespeare to Roald Dahl.

For more information, you can visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

Summer closures on A21

RESURFACING will be carried out on sections of the A21 between Pembury and Hastings this summer.

The work will involve overnight carriageway and lane closures along five sections of the road and is due to be completed by the end of August.

Biennale by the seaside

THE Whitstable Biennale is back for its seventh time and promising to be a delight for art-lovers.

It starts this weekend will continue throughout the month, with events taking place across the seaside town.

Visit www.whitstablebiennale.com.

Sandwich cycle event

THE Tour de Sandwich cycle event takes place next weekend (Sunday, June 8).

There is a choice of three routes, starting and finishing in Sandwich. Depending on fitness levels, you can ride from 50-100 kilometres.

Visit www.sandwichevents.org.uk.

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LAST FEW SEATS REMAINING!

Numbers of Britain's fastest-disappearing mammal are at an all-time low, caused by a mix of habitat loss and the attentions of a predator that belongs the other side of the Atlantic. By **Maria Chiorando**.

Mink are killing our water voles, but are they also victims?

AT a time when it seems like the county's insatiable thirst for housing development and infrastructure expansion is leaving little room for wildlife, one declining species still captures the imagination of many.

The humble water vole, which maintains a stronghold in Kent, has been facing a decades-long struggle to survive.

It is Britain's fasting-disappearing mammal, with its already-small population slashed by another 22 per cent in the last five years alone, taking numbers to an all-time low, estimated at fewer than 200,000 in the UK.

This is a big drop from pre-1960s figures, when it was estimated the population was some eight million.

The water vole is a semi-aquatic mammal and the most widely-known of the country's voles.

It is sometimes, wrongly, called the water rat due to its not dissimilar appearance, but there are differences: shorter, furry tails; flat ears (that stop water coming in); and rounder faces.

Water voles are herbivores with huge appetites, consuming up to 80 per cent of their own body weight in vegetation each day and living in self-made burrows, built using horizontal layers that prevent flooding.

There are two main issues facing this gentle mammal: man's destruction of the voles' habitat and the predatory attentions of the American mink, which is also a man-made problem.

The mink, a robust and muscular hunter of voles, has had a firm paw in reducing the numbers of its smaller prey.

It is a carnivore and in its indigenous New World range feasts on the musk rat. Here in the UK, however, water voles have become a substitute source of nutrition.

Sam Thomas, of Kent Wildlife Trust, said: "The mink infestation started in the early 1900s with the beginning of fur-farming in the UK.

"American mink were brought over and I think records show from the first year of fur-farming they were escaping into the wild.

"New legislation brought in some decades later said fur-farmers had to improve the cages being used.

"Those who couldn't afford to do that simply released their mink into the wild.

"There is a story that does the rounds about some mink that were released in the 1970s or 80s by animal-rights activists, but the reality is that it was a drop in the ocean by then.

"Mink were already well established and in all likelihood the ones they released would not have survived very well in the wild."

Kate Fowler, of Animal Aid in Tonbridge, agrees. "Human interference brought us the mink in the first place – they are victims themselves," she said.

"They weren't released here for their own good – they were stuck in filthy, disgusting cages for their fur and killed in the most brutal ways possible. When that industry collapsed, the farmers turned all the mink out and weren't prosecuted for the damage they'd done. Of course, fur-farming is illegal now, and so it should be – mink are the victims in this as much as anything."

BAD NEIGHBOURS: Water voles are defenceless when they come into contact with the predatory American mink

What makes the mink such a danger to the water vole is this: none of the vole's native predators share the mink's combination of being able to swim and being small enough to fit into the vole burrows.

Female mink can dive and have a slight enough stature to swim into the burrows, which are effectively a food store to them. They raid the burrows and feed on the defenceless voles.

According to Kent Wildlife Trust, it is essential to control the mink population to provide a safer environment in which voles can flourish.

Mr Thomas said: "It's quite a sensitive operation. Unfortunately, they are non-native and are highly damaging to our native animals, so they have to be controlled.

> **"This is a standard problem in this country: as soon as there are lots of one species we say there are too many and start to kill them"**
>
> **Kate Fowler,** of Animal Aid, who is against the culling of mink

"We can determine whether mink have a presence in particular areas by deploying special rafts.

"We can tell what kind of animal has been walking over the rafts due to the special clay we put on them, and if mink are there we do unfortunately have to control them by a pest-controller. We try to avoid poisoning and use a more humane method of dispatch, usually shooting.

"Obviously, here at the trust we all like animals, and they are certainly impressive predators, so the most humane way is the way forward.

"It's a difficult situation – it's not their fault, it's what humans have done to put them in their situation."

However, Ms Fowler disagrees with the pro-killing argument, believing culling is not necessarily the answer.

She said: "You see this so often, a quick, knee-jerk solution to a complex problem, but actually water vole populations have been declining for a very long time, before mink were introduced, and as ever the problem is multi-faceted.

"Largely, the voles rely on water banks for survival, and dredging, reinforcing riverbanks for flood defences, angling, mowing banksides and, of course, pollution, have all had a big impact on numbers.

"At the same time, mink numbers are also dropping and otters are making a comeback.

"Otters also attack water voles, as do owls, herons and all sorts of other animals, so I think to say that if you kill mink you've solved the problem… well, I think that's very far from the mark.

"Water voles are very common in Europe and they are seen as a pest there. This is a standard problem in this country: as soon as there are lots of one species we say there are too many and start to kill them.

"I don't know that it is necessarily true to say that if you restore all the habitats, and fill them with voles, that mink will automatically decimate that population by eating them all.

"It isn't that straightforward as once river banks have been reinforced, thus destroying the habitat, you can't un-reinforce them – that habitat is gone.

"You are therefore creating new habitats. Effectively, we can make up habitats and just put water voles in them, but it's a very unnatural way.

"I think that nature does rather sort itself out. When there are population booms, they come down again and I don't think we need to get overly het up about one species doing well at the expense of another."

At the moment, Kent Wildlife Trust is forging ahead with projects in several areas of the county to try to save the vole.

As well as controlling mink numbers, it is looking at creating safer and more suitable spaces in which voles can hopefully flourish.

Water voles favour lush vegetation, which could amount to a strip from the water course back as little as five metres or so.

The trust works with landowners to manage water courses to implement some of these changes.

It also tries to maintain consistent water levels and fairly steep banks to avoid degradation of the banks through machinery.

There is a huge effort taking place in the county to provide adequate space for the water vole.

Mr Thomas said: "In Kent, work is going on – there's currently a project around the North Kent Marshes to encourage better land management that's covering thousands of acres. That's a massive-scale project.

"There's another one in the Darent Valley and other works going on with the Environment Agency.

"There are certain places in Kent, like the Darent Valley, where there has been success removing mink.

"Other places, like the North Kent Marshes, it is more important to restore the habitat where there was historically a mink population but it has now gone and the main problem is habitat.

"You have to look at each of these areas on a case-by-case basis, then try to take the best course of action."

Despite such efforts, numbers continue to fall, so it is to be hoped the new habitats being created will foster a growth in the water vole population over the coming years.

Only time will tell what effect, if any, the mink cull will have on vole numbers.

Ms Fowler concluded: "It seems that, whatever the species, if someone thinks there are too many of them, then the calls for culling get louder.

"Why can't we just accept that nature fluctuates, numbers rise and fall, some animals predate and others are prey?"

For now it seems the water vole will continue to face an uphill struggle if it is ever to return to a strong population.

There is one thing on which everyone can agree, and that is the importance of providing habitat for the voles that has plentiful food supplies and adequate spaces for burrowing.

The more contentious issue, of course, is the one of the mink.

While some maintain that culling them is the only option, others feel that playing God with an entire species is unlikely to restore an equilibrium that was altered by humans in the first place.

One thing is for sure, though: our countryside will continue to shrink, taking with it much of our once-treasured wildlife.

■ **Kent Wildlife Trust is running an appeal to save the county's water voles. Information can be found at www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/donate/watervole.**

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BLUE HORIZONS: Elmley National Nature Reserve on the Isle of Sheppey boasts stunning views and a wealth of wildlife

Side by side with nature holds no reservations for Elmley custodian

When her father bought some Sheppey farmland 30 years ago, little did Georgina Fulton imagine one day she would be responsible for looking after one of Kent's most special places, writes **Caroline Read**

WHAT do you see when you look out of your kitchen window? For Georgina Fulton and her family, it's an expanse of wild marsh and farmland on the Isle of Sheppey.

They have only one neighbour, their resident land manager, and it's a two-mile drive down a rough track from their house to the nearest road.

The Fultons live on and manage Elmley National Nature Reserve, the only site to have such designation and be managed privately as part of a farm.

For birdwatchers and lovers of wide open spaces, the marshes of Elmley have long been a popular haunt, but that was when the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds leased part of the Fultons' Kingshill Farm as a reserve.

Now the charity has moved out and the family, more used to rearing calves than running a visitor attraction, are going it alone.

Mrs Fulton's father, Philip Merrick, bought the land 30 years ago, although the family lived in a farmhouse near New Romney.

She says that with the marshes at Elmley, he took on distinctly more than he was bargaining for.

"It was initially an arable farm," said Mrs Fulton. "Obviously it's a marsh now and it was a marsh years back in history, but it had been managed, drained and farmed.

"And then when all the protection regulations came in, some time in the 1980s, it was recognised as a special place for wildlife and there were a lot of protections put on what farming practices you could do there.

"My father actually decided to deal with it positively. He turned the land into grazing marsh, so we now have cattle and sheep grazing on it.

"It's funny, actually, because the marsh looks like the most natural wilderness, but it's mostly man-made.

"All the rills and ditches have all been created in such a way that the farming and the nature conservation work very much in harmony."

Indeed, it is all very symbiotic at Elmley.

The Fultons' cattle and sheep graze the natural grasses low enough for the birds to nest.

Similarly, the water levels have to be managed to make sure it's safe for the animals to roam – and that, too, benefits the birdlife.

> **"The RSPB's lease on part of our land expired in May 2013 and both sides decided not to renew it. Things were running really well here in terms of conservation and the RSPB thought their resources would be best used elsewhere"**
>
> **Georgina Fulton,** on the RSPB's decision to leave Elmley reserve

The reserve is one of the best places for birds in the country; avocets, lapwings, redshanks, marsh harriers, teal and wigeon are just some of the species to call this place home.

Mrs Fulton and her husband Gareth had not lived on a farm as adults, but they decided the time was right to settle down and start a family.

Asking Mrs Fulton's father if they could take care of Kingshill Farm and the reserve themselves came just as the RSPB were pulling out, it all worked out perfectly.

Having lived in London, then Sheffield and most recently Cyprus, it was quite a culture shock when they moved into one of only two isolated cottages on the land.

They have since been joined by a baby daughter, Eleni, now four months old and almost certainly the only baby living on a national nature reserve.

"The RSPB's lease on part of our land expired in May 2013 and both sides decided not to renew it.

"Things were running really well here in terms of conservation and the RSPB thought their resources would be best used elsewhere.

"So we're now looking after all the visitors, which is kind of a new departure for the farm. It's a whole new kettle of fish, but it's good fun."

Since the couple took over the management of the reserve as well as the farm, they have been increasingly busy.

Not only do they have to get on with general farm life, including at the moment calving season, but they are expanding what the reserve offers to attract more visitors.

The land already had three birdwatching hides, a car park and toilets, but the idea that Mrs Fulton is hoping to see come to fruition this summer is to allow visitors to stay overnight.

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« PAGE 11

She has just been granted planning permission for some shepherds' huts and bell tents to offer a 'glamping' experience to those seeking a night away from the rat race. Elmley is said to have some of the most spectacular sunrises and sunsets in the country.

"We're starting off with three shepherds' huts," said Mrs Fulton.

"They'll be quite luxurious – almost a romantic hideaway. They'll be warm as well, so they can be open all year round.

"Winter is the best time for birders, but I hope it won't just be birders – it's for people who just want to escape.

"You can get away from the stresses of everyday life here and really just get invigorated and refreshed."

Other than birdwatchers, another market to have cottoned on to what Elmley has to offer is that of artists and photographers. With the wildlife so abundant, Mrs Fulton says she can't get anywhere quickly because of the chicks wandering along the drive in late spring, so there are few places better in Kent for photographing mammals, birds and insects.

She said: "It is primarily birds that we're known for, but we are also renowned for our hares.

"You'd have to be quite unlucky to drive up on a nice day and not see any hares. Many people have never even seen a hare, but we have lots of them and, especially at this time of year, they're out in force."

She describes the two-mile stretch of track to get to the car park as being like a safari, with most cars pulling up at points along the way as their drivers spot things.

Photographers particularly like this because the birds and animals take no notice of cars and wander right up to them in some cases.

So many photographers have been attracted to the spot that the reserve is offering special photographic events and short courses.

"We work with two local photographers who both really learnt their trade coming here," said Mrs Fulton.

"They're running courses in what they specialise in, so one is sunrise workshops and wonderful landscapes, while the other specialises in macro photography, so close-ups.

"We have quite a special quality of light down here on Sheppey, being an island and coastal.

"The land is very flat and the sky is so large, so photographers love it.

"We have some artists, too, and we're trying to make the place known to more painters."

The reserve doesn't receive any funding for the visitors' facilities, so the Fultons are having to look into innovative ways of making money.

They have also recently set up the Friends Of Elmley scheme. For an annual contribution, as a family or an individual, you can have free access throughout the year. With one-off visitors, they rely on an honesty box in the car park and a suggested £5 donation.

And there are more plans for the future.

They have had their Kentish barn licensed for weddings and hope to have the derelict 17th-century farmhouse renovated eventually.

Once the main house at the farm, it is said to have been where King James II was locked up in 1688 while trying to escape his Protestant persecutors. It's where the name Kingshill Farm came from.

All this has been a huge change in the lives of Mr and Mrs Fulton, but with the arrival of their daughter earlier this year it got a lot more complicated.

"It is difficult," Mrs Fulton said.

"I see mothers who can just walk to the shops with their pram, but here it's a two-mile drive to get to the road.

"It is a little remote – you have to be very organised because if you run out of nappies it's not a quick drive to the nearest shop.

"But there are always lots of people around and we've got to know some of the regular birdwatchers.

"There are always people to stop and have a chat to.

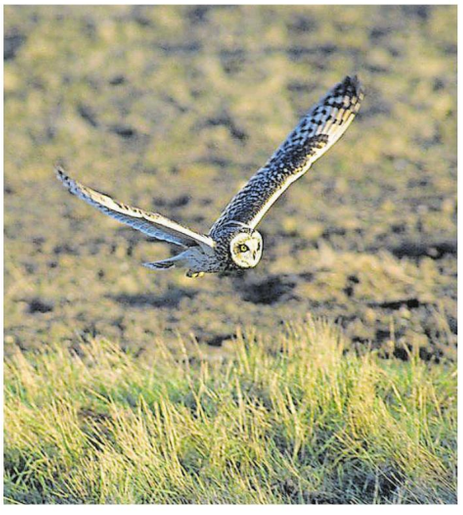
"This place really is an escape, though, and we don't want to have restaurants and gift shops on site.

"I mean, here I am looking out of my kitchen window and it's green marsh and meadows as far as the eye can see. We want to keep it that way for everyone."

> **"Here I am looking out of my kitchen window and it's green marsh and meadows as far as the eye can see. We want to keep it that way for everyone."**
>
> **Georgina Fulton,** on her wonderful life at Elmley

Pictures: ROBERT CANIS

WILD SIDE: Birdwatchers and photographers are spoilt for choice by the abundance of wildlife on show at Elmley



GETTING THERE...

Road
FROM junction 5 on the M2, follow the A249 towards Sheerness. The reserve is signposted from the exit for Iwade and Ridham Dock, immediately before the Sheppey bridge. At the roundabout, take the second exit on to the old road bridge. On Sheppey, take the first right, following the brown Elmley Reserve sign. There is a two-mile access road to the car park at Kingshill Farm.

Rail
SWALE Halt (request stop), is three miles from the reserve car park. From the station, walk alongside the A249 and turn right after one mile where the reserve is signposted. Follow the access road for two miles to the car park at Kingshill Farm.

Bus
THERE is a bus from Sheerness to Sittingbourne that will stop on request at the top of the access road leading to the reserve. The reserve is open from 8am-8pm or sunset if earlier; it is closed on Tuesdays. Visit www.elmleynaturereserve.co.uk for more on the reserve.

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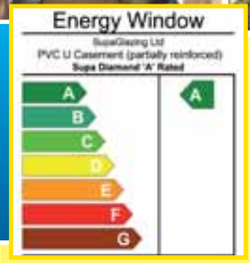

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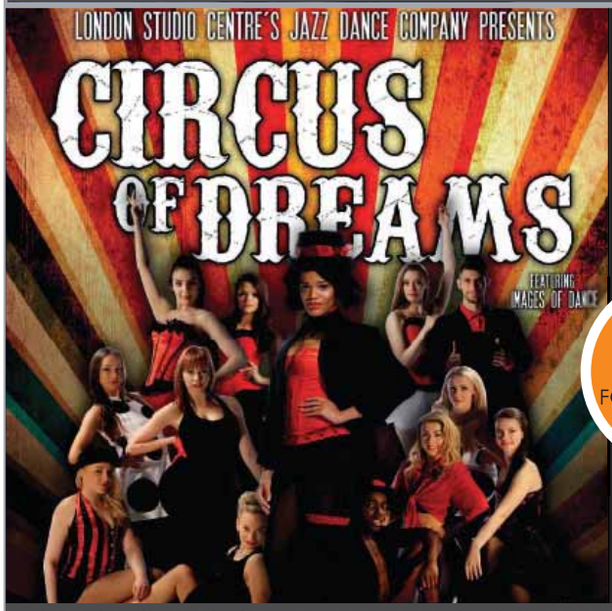

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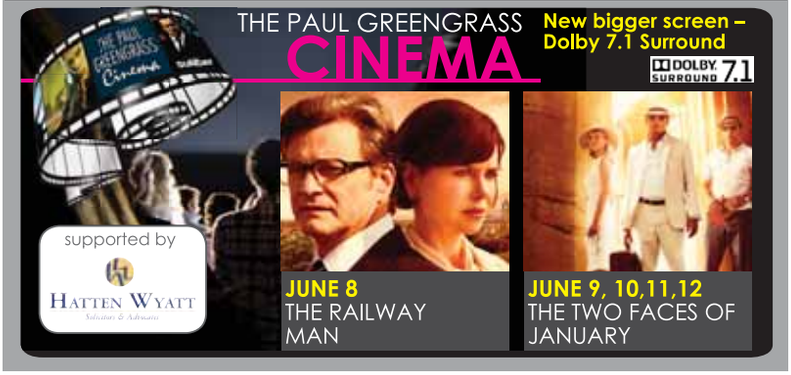

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THE TWO FACES OF JANUARY

Ukip triumph leaves Britain's big three with some serious issues ahead of 2015 election

As the dust settles on Nigel Farage's European success, **Sarah Linney** reviews a possible sea-change in UK politics and what that may mean for the major parties at next year's polls

"IT wasn't a good result for anyone other than Ukip."

It's hard to disagree with radio presenter and political pundit Iain Dale's assessment of the European elections, in which Ukip triumphed over the Conservatives and Labour and the Liberal Democrats were all but demolished.

With 32 per cent of the vote and four MEPs elected in the South East region, which includes Kent, Nigel Farage's party left the formerly dominant Tories languishing with just three MEPs.

Although the Conservatives polled a respectable 31 per cent of the vote, Labour sloped home with just 15 per cent, remaining on one MEP.

The results were more balanced nationally: 27 per cent of the vote for Ukip, 25 per cent for Labour and 24 per cent for the Tories.

But it was still the first national election in a century that had been won by a party other than the main two.

"That's something that we have not really had since the Second World War – the emergence of a new national party," said Richard Whitman, professor of politics and international relations at the University of Kent.

"Ukip have broken the mould – and they are doing it on the right, where the Conservative Party has historically been quite a broad coalition of both nationalist and Christian Democrat [more centre-right] types.

"On the left there has always been a bit of choice between Labour and the Liberal Democrats."

He said the Tories, who lost seven seats and 4 per cent of the vote nationally, probably now needed to work on their policy on immigration.

"It's a core issue that Ukip have tapped in to," Mr Whitman said.

"People tend to vote in general elections on well-being issues, and immigration has become a very toxic issue in British politics.

"People believe jobs are being taken by people from within the European Union. I think they [the Tories] have got to find the fine line between that and the principle they hold to that freer immigration is good for Britain in terms of letting its economy operate effectively.

"So far the things they have said have not really captured the public. The Conservatives do have a clear position on the European Union, so they have to reassure voters on other issues that Ukip have an appeal on."

According to Mr Dale, Labour also needs to get its act together with just a year to go before a general election.

"They only beat the Tories by 1.5 per cent – 25 per cent of the vote is not a position to win a general election from," said Mr Dale, who presents the Drivetime show each weekday on radio station LBC.

"If you look at some of the seats they have to win in Kent to win in 2015, for example Chatham and Aylesford and most of the north Kent seats, they are not going to win on the evidence of Thursday.

"I think people look at [leader] Ed Miliband and don't see a potential Prime Minister. Labour have to get back the people who voted for Tony Blair in 1997, but they are talking to the people who are already going to vote for them."

Mr Farage has said himself that he doesn't expect to win a general election – and both the commentators we spoke to agree.

It is usually very difficult anyway for a minority party to win seats under the first-past-the-post system.

Mr Dale predicted Ukip could win Grimsby and Thurrock, as well as some seats in Kent – possibly in the north of the county and Thanet, where Mr Farage is tipped to stand.

"I think they will win a handful of seats – not more than five," Mr Dale said.

"I am not sure Thanet is the right seat for Nigel Farage. Dover would be good because it is a marginal and because of the demographic – the immigration message will resonate.

> **“I think the role Ukip are going to play is going to be as important as formally being part of the government – they could affect whether the Tories get a majority”**

Professor Richard Whitman,
from the University of Kent

“It is not just ex-Tories who vote Ukip – quite a few Labour voters do, too. There are a lot of Labour voters who if you tested them would come out quite right-wing.

“A lot of former Lib Dem voters voted Ukip, which is bizarre. But there is an anti-politics feeling among some parts of the electorate, and Ukip got the protest votes that the Lib Dems used to get. It’s only the intelligentsia who could never bring themselves to vote Ukip.”

Mr Whitman said Ukip could also play a crucial role in determining the composition of the next government by taking votes from the two main parties.

“I think the role they are going to play is going to be as important as formally being part of the Government,” he said.

“They could affect whether the Conservatives are able to get a majority or not.

“They are now the ultimate spoiler party for the General Election. They are likely to be taking away quite a large percentage of the electorate, which makes it tricky for the main parties – the Tories and Labour both might lose seats.”

Although the Greens gained an extra MEP, their share of the vote declined nationally and in the South East, where Keith Taylor was re-elected with 9 per cent of the vote.

“You don’t ever really get more than one protest party,” Mr Dale said.

Mr Whitman said he thought the Greens’ share of the vote would decline at the ballot boxes next year.

“The European Parliament elections are not about voting for the composition of a government, so you can gamble a bit – but disaffected Liberal Democrats might go back to the Lib Dems for the general election,” he said.

The Liberal Democrats did terribly this month, halving their share of the vote to just 7 per cent nationally and plummeting from 11 MEPs to one – who happens to be South East MEP Catherine Bearder.

According to Mr Whitman, the role the party has played in government is largely to blame.

“It is purely and simply down to their inability to distinguish themselves within the Coalition,” he said.

“A lot of people can’t forget what they see as a betrayal by the Lib Dems – first on the student-fees issue and second by doing the dirty work of a Conservative government and providing a veneer of respectability to the Coalition. It is really difficult for voters to see any positive.”

He said the party had lost itself within the Coalition and needed to redefine what it stood for.

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Insults and hysteria aren’t going to achieve anything… it’s time politicians listened to the people

KOS COMMENT

IT wasn’t a landslide – but, whether the main parties want to admit it or not, it was probably an earthquake.

For the first time in 100 years, a national election was won by a party that wasn’t Labour or Conservative.

And it was one that didn’t even exist 25 years ago.

Ukip’s success has divided opinion. No one is indifferent to the party.

The 27.5 per cent of people who voted for them – 32 per cent in the South East region – think they’re wonderful.

Opponents call the party a bunch of xenophobic idiots. And, sometimes, there has been the evidence to apparently support that view.

There are people within the party who are on record as having expressed xenophobic views.

I don’t think even Nigel Farage would deny that.

But it would be unfair and inaccurate to tar all the party’s members and voters with the same brush.

And it will also do nothing to solve the serious problem with disaffection that we clearly have in British politics.

If more people are voting for a party that many consider extreme than for any other – including Britain’s trio of main established parties – then that means two things.

It means a lot of people feel alienated from the big three, and that there are some serious issues they are not addressing.

Whether that’s European integration, or immigration, or just a perceived lack of relevant policies and empathy, is hard to say.

But it’s something our political leaders need to work out.

Immigrants have been blamed throughout history for communities’ problems.

That has never been true.

Immigrants are reported to actually contribute more to the British economy than its natives. If Britain has problems, then perhaps the responsibility for them lies at its own door.

But, that said, if something is a concern for a lot of people, then it is time we talked about it, sensibly and reasonably.

The debates about European integration and immigration have descended into nastiness and scaremongering on both sides.

Those on the sceptical side are called racists; the others traitors to the national interest.

But it doesn’t make you a racist if you think that Britain is a small island and risks being overpopulated if immigration is unchecked.

It doesn’t make you a xenophobe if you’re all in favour of economic union with Europe but don’t like the idea of political integration.

Nor does it make you a crazy idealist to argue that we should be proud to give a generous welcome to anyone who wants to come here.

Or anti-democratic to say that European politicians have brought in a lot of laws that have benefited this country.

Insults and hysteria are not going to achieve anything.

The politicians need to listen to the people – and the people need to listen to each other.

Sarah Linney

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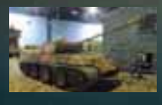
NEW AIRFIX D-DAY EXHIBITION

Airfix D-Day exhibition is now open at the Hornby Visitor Centre, this exhibition helps celebrate one of the most important days of the 20th Century. The Operation Neptune exhibition features a huge interactive diorama and displays setting out some of the key stories from the ‘Day of Days’. The new exhibition will be included in the admission cost to the Hornby Visitor Centre.



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"They have to stop themselves going even further backwards. It's about survival," Mr Whitman said.

"They need to rebuild the case for the Lib Dems in the UK.

"Going into the Coalition has eroded their brand, but they can't leave because they have set themselves up in it as doing responsible things for politics – and I don't think leaving would boost them in the polls.

"They need to re-establish themselves as an opposition party and they have to start doing that in government and opposing Tory policies.

"I think they are going to have a dire general election. It is going to require nerves of steel to be a Liberal Democrat now."

Neither pundit thought that Nick Clegg should resign, with Mr Whitman pointing out that the party may then need a second change of leader if things did not improve come next year's vote.

"The Lib Dems would be mad to get rid of Nick Clegg," Mr Dale said.

"He's the one that took them into government and they should be grateful to him.

"They would gain absolutely nothing by getting rid of him. It doesn't matter who the leader is, I think people have made up their minds about the Lib Dems and they are going to lose some seats with incredibly large majorities.

"The electorate are exacting their revenge."

And he said he did not think running on a pro-European ticket had done the party any favours.

UNDER PRESSURE: Calls for Lib Dem leader Nick Clegg to step down

"There are many more Lib Dem voters who are Eurosceptic than they thought," Mr Dale said.

"Britain has never been a pro-EU country – and if you are pro-Europe you don't necessarily vote for the party that's pro-Europe.

"If you ask people what their top 10 issues are, Europe is not the top of their agendas.

"No one quite knows where the Lib Dem vote will go – and we don't know what will happen to the Ukip vote.

"The next election is wide open. Anyone who predicts the result is mad."

■ **For a full round-up of the results in Kent and our interview with Nigel Farage, visit www.kentnews.co.uk.**

Winners have their say…

Nigel Farage

FOR someone who described himself as "half dead" on the phone from Brussels, Nigel Farage sounded pretty jubilant.

"The dream has become a reality," the Ukip leader and South East MEP told Kent on Sunday.

"The Kent results are astounding.

"We will now be targeting a number of seats in Kent at the general election, though we haven't decided which ones.

"We now need to develop our manifesto and get ourselves in shape for next year."

Anneliese Dodds

NEWLY-ELECTED Labour MEP Anneliese Dodds said the party had been hoping for a second seat in the South East.

But she pointed out that right-wing parties tended to do better in European elections than left-wing parties, adding: "I think we will have a different result in the general election.

"Where Labour concentrated on having discussions with people we had really good results."

Keith Taylor

GREEN MEP Keith Taylor said he was "delighted" to have been re-elected in the South East.

"We beat the Lib Dems almost everywhere – we are the fourth party in UK politics," Mr Taylor said.

"I would like to think that the people who voted for us voted for a party of hope rather than a party that promoted fear. The difficulty we have had has been in getting any media response."

Richard Ashworth

TORY MEP Richard Ashworth says the party "doesn't necessarily" need to become more Eurosceptic.

"There is a disparate group of people who have supported Ukip," Mr Ashworth said.

"There is a hardcore who are extremely Eurosceptic and want to leave Europe; there are a lot of people who are anti-immigration; and there are also a lot of Conservative voters who want to send a message to David Cameron.

"We need to spell out very clearly what David Cameron's proposals for the European Union are and assure people that we will hold a referendum on Europe."

Catherine Bearder

LIBERAL Democrat MEP Catherine Bearder said it would be "churlish" for the party to demand leader Nick Clegg's resignation.

"He doesn't do it all on his own. The party is made up of a lot of people and we all need to look at what we are doing and how we can improve," she said.

And she said the party had done the right thing by running on a pro-European ticket.

"The people we speak to, businesses and trade unions, say we are saying absolutely the right thing – we have got to stay in the European Union," she said.

Advertisement Feature

Gill Turner Tucker Solicitors and Dundas & Duce Solicitors Merger

Long established Maidstone law firms, Gill Turner Tucker and Dundas & Duce are merging.

The team from Dundas & Duce will be moving into Gill Turner Tucker's offices in Colman House on King Street on 2nd June and the merged firm will employ 27 people including 4 Partners.

Commercial Partner and Head of the Residential Property Department for Gill Turner Tucker, James Kent, said: "Both firms have a long established reputation within Maidstone for providing high quality advice and client service. Gill Turner Tucker was established in 1949 and offers a wide array of services in different practice areas whilst Dundas & Duce specialise in residential conveyancing. The merger will strengthen our existing residential property team to form one of the largest in Maidstone at a time when the residential property market is showing strong signs of recovery from the recession".

Colin Duce, owner of Dundas & Duce, said: "Dundas & Duce has been a presence in the local community since 1985 and we are well known for our residential property expertise. I believe that Gill Turner Tucker is a perfect fit for us and will enable us to continue providing a great service to our existing clients whilst now being able to offer them the advantages that come with being represented by a firm offering many additional areas of legal expertise. We are all very excited for the future".

The firm now trades as Gill Turner Tucker Solicitors incorporating Dundas & Duce Solicitors.

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■ **From left to right – Yester Adourian, Robert Green, Colin Duce, Michael Trigg, Mark Sayers and James Kent.**

Bedroom tax: an attack on the poor or change for the better?

The Government's decision to cut housing benefit for those deemed to have spare bedrooms has proved one of its most disliked policies, but the move has been welcomed in other quarters. **Sarah Linney** speaks to some of those affected.

IT'S been slammed as a "vicious" move, blamed for thousands of people falling into rent arrears, and even been the subject of a High Court challenge.

The change to housing benefit that came into force a year ago – known widely as the 'bedroom tax' – has probably become one of the Coalition Government's most disliked policies.

Yet it has undoubtedly helped thousands of families across the country move into more spacious accommodation – which is undeniably a positive thing.

So why is what the Government calls the "abolition of the spare room subsidy", which isn't actually a tax at all, so unpopular?

The principle is simple: people who claim housing benefit and live in council or housing association homes have had their housing benefit cut if their house is deemed to have spare bedrooms they do not need.

Benefit is cut by 14 per cent if a household has one spare bedroom and 25 per cent if it has two or more spare bedrooms.

When the Government brought in the change, it estimated it would leave those affected an average £56-£64 a month worse off.

One of its aims is to encourage people to move into smaller homes to avoid the extra charge, thereby freeing up bigger houses for families whose need is greater.

But there are several problems with this.

First, there aren't always smaller homes available; second, people often find the idea of losing their homes unacceptable; and, third, they may well use their spare bedroom for all sorts of things – from storing belongings to having family members to stay.

Medway council Labour leader Vince Maple denounced the tax in a piece on the party's website. "It is a vicious policy. The most vulnerable in society are being disproportionately hurt," he said.

"Even if you did support the concept of a punitive measure to get people to downsize houses, there are simply not enough houses for people to downsize to. We have seen, since the early 1980s, the supply of new housing not matching the need."

Steve Wilkins, from campaign group Medway Against The Cuts, agreed, saying: "It's an attack on people who are already struggling and is inflicting large amounts of misery on the poor and disabled.

"People are being put under enormous financial pressure when they already have low incomes that are being squeezed.

"Most are desperately trying to hang on to their homes, so they are paying by any means, but there's a real danger they will increasingly find it impossible.

"People can keep going for so long, but something very small can tip them over the edge. But as far as the councils and the powers that be are concerned, everything is great until there's some sort of huge crisis."

He said the Government was targeting the poor for ideological reasons,

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MOVING FORWARD: Brendan Ryan says bedroom tax is achieving its aim

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rather than out of a genuine desire to improve the housing situation.

"This government's intention is to reduce the amount of money that is spent on benefits so they can have tax cuts," Mr Wilkins said.

"What underpins this is a belief that if you are on benefits you need to stand on your own two feet.

"But imagine saying to people who own five-bedroom homes that they have to move to a three-bedroom house. So why is it OK to do it to people in social housing?

"One woman who moved, whose husband was disabled, was quite distressed. They had had to move somewhere smaller and their furniture didn't fit, so they didn't have much furniture as they couldn't afford it."

He said that the solution was not to make people in council homes move but to build more council homes and keep rents under control.

"It's not that there's not enough housing. A study showed recently there is enough for everyone, but it is in the hands of the wealthy," Mr Wilkins said.

"Fifty years ago, council housing was available to anyone who wanted it and it was of a high standard. But there has been a concerted attempt to close down council houses and very little council housing is being built.

"Rents have been going up by much more than the rate of inflation, so the Government's response is there's a housing crisis and that housing benefit is spiralling out of control.

"This is all nonsense. If you want to bring down the housing benefit budget, stop rents spiralling.

"Anyone over 65 is exempt from the bedroom tax and I am not opposed to that, but I would say there is probably much greater under-occupation among the over-65s than in people of working age.

"If the tax was seriously about dealing with under-occupation they would have dealt with people over 65."

> **"Rents have been going up by more than the rate of inflation, so the Government's response is there's a crisis and benefits are out of control"**
>
> **Steve Wilkins,** campaigner for Medway Against The Cuts

Figures from councils across Kent show that the 'tax' has encouraged only a small proportion of tenants to move.

In Medway, just 20 households out of the 292 affected, or 6 per cent, had downsized by last September.

In Ashford, 113 households swapped homes during the 2013-2014 financial year, compared with 104 during 2012-2013 – an 8 per cent increase.

And East Kent Housing, which provides social housing in Thanet, Canterbury and Dover, said only 16 per cent of the 1,710 tenants affected by the tax had expressed a wish to move.

Thirteen of its tenants – fewer than 1 per cent – decided to find work as a result of the tax, a number that doesn't bear out the view that large numbers of people on benefits would suddenly find themselves able to work if forced to tighten their belts.

Spokeswoman Lucy Tuson admitted that tenants were suffering.

"We have seen lots of people being referred to foodbanks or having to get help from charities," she said.

"Thanet unemployment rates continue to be among the highest in Kent."

However, the association's chief executive Brendan Ryan said the tax was achieving what it was intended to achieve.

"By and large it is helping to improve the supply of social housing," he said.

"It's certainly helped more than 200 families move to larger accommodation and I would confidently say few of those would have moved without these changes in benefits.

"A lot of the benefit changes are broadly welcomed by the housing profession, because they see there is a mismatch between people who are living in properties far bigger than they need and other families that are overcrowded and need to move up.

"You can see the philosophy that underpins the changes. There is an acute shortage of all forms of housing, and councils are facing real pressures in terms of homelessness.

"I don't think anyone can really argue, unless they have a special need for larger accommodation."

He said that, harsh as the measure seemed, council tenants were in no worse a position than private renters.

"It is a bit rigid – there are circumstances where people have a very legitimate need for an extra bedroom, for example people who have their own dialysis machines, or people with disabilities who have carers, and

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CASE STUDY: ONE

"IT really made me a lot worse off," says Darren Stayner, who had to move away from friends after the bedroom tax left him unable to afford his home in Teynham.

The 42-year-old, who is unable to work because of health problems including degenerative disc disease and a brain abnormality, says the extra £32.04 a fortnight he had to pay made it impossible for him to afford even the basics.

"I couldn't feed myself for about two weeks," Mr Stayner told KoS.

"Everything was fine until the bedroom tax came in and I was happy in my flat, but then I fell behind with my rent.

"There are so many bills: electricity, gas, insurance. It was killing me."

Mr Stayner had little choice but to move from his two-bedroom house in Teynham to a flat in Herne Bay and then a one-bedroom bungalow in Whitstable, which he says is further from his friends and family.

"My heart goes out to those still trying to pay the tax, because I know what it's like," he said.

"If a family get behind, catching up just does you in.

"But the Government don't seem to understand the really needy people who do struggle.

"They are putting them in more debt and making them struggle more. They think we have money somewhere, but we don't.

"They don't hit the rich people – they give them tax breaks.

"They are hitting the poor people and making the rich richer.

"They should try living it and paying the bedroom tax, and see how far they get."

the regulations don't allow that," Mr Ryan said.

"But if you were renting from a private landlord you wouldn't get additional benefit to cover bedrooms you didn't need. It makes it a level playing field.

"It is harsh, but that's reality.

"People can get a job, take a lodger, move to somewhere smaller or make savings elsewhere and pay the extra rent."

However, he said he had expected more tenants to move and was concerned people would find themselves unable to manage as time went on.

"Most people said they were going to tough it out, and that was quite worrying as it wasn't sustainable in the long term," he said.

"When the additional money impacts week after week, it will grind you down and lead you into debt.

"Some people are not coping and going into rent arrears – they are the ones we are trying to move most quickly. Some people rely on relatives or loan sharks."

About 450 of the association's tenants were awarded discretionary housing payments – a top-up benefit to cover the shortfall.

> **"We do try not to evict people. We are dealing with some of the poorest sections of society who don't have the skills to manage their own finances."**
>
> **Brendan Ryan,**
> Chief executive East Kent Housing

Mr Ryan said: "There's a huge amount of support going in for vulnerable people – they should get these additional benefits.

"There's a recognition that to get so many people to move is impractical."

The association's arrears have decreased by £152,000 since April 2013 – the third year running there has been a fall – and Mr Ryan said that of the 48 evictions in the last year he did not believe any were related to the bedroom tax – although the number of evictions had risen.

"We do try not to evict people," he said.

"We are dealing with some of the poorest sections of society – people who don't have the skills to manage their own finances – and we do try to spend a lot more time these days working with debt-advice agencies, helping them to put some order in their financial matters, as we will be just one of a whole range of people they owe money to.

"The decrease in arrears is not something we were expecting and we are really pleased with it, but the underlying worry is a lot of that is

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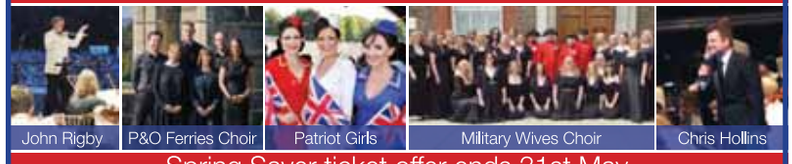

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propped up by discretionary housing benefit, and how sustainable is that in the long term? The concern is it's just delaying the problem."

Ashford Borough Council also saw the number of tenants in arrears decrease, from 1,413 in March 2013 to 1,257 a year later.

It said the number of evictions had increased from six in 2012-13 to 16 in 2013-14 but that none of these had been "solely" caused by the bedroom tax – although it had started proceedings to evict a tenant in March purely as a result of the tax.

Tracey Kerly, head of communities and housing, said the tax had had "a positive impact" in Ashford.

"It has encouraged people to move to more suitable accommodation," Mrs Kerly said.

"We have a growing housing waiting list and there is an issue with people who are living in oversized accommodation. This releases family accommodation.

"We are moving people into equally good accommodation but of a smaller size.

"To heat a three-bedroom house is more expensive if you are on your own, so why wouldn't you move to somewhere more suitable?"

She said the council tried to be sensitive and move tenants with minimal disruption to their lives.

"Some people will have lived somewhere for their whole lives, so we are trying to keep people local and not move them away from their friends and neighbours," Mrs Kerly said.

"We are not expecting someone who lives in Wittersham, Appledore or Charing to give up a three-bedroom house and move to Ashford. However, memories stay with you.

POSITIVE ACTION: Tracey Kerly

"I don't think it necessarily means that they have to stay in that house for the rest of their lives."

However, she would not be drawn on whether she thought the tax was working.

"I am not a politician," Mrs Kerly said.

"There will be some people who have fallen into arrears, but we will continue to work with them to encourage them to move or take in a lodger.

"If someone won't downsize, there comes a point where we can't do any more to help them and that's a choice they make.

"People have to make choices about their priorities and that's where we all are."

CASE STUDY: TWO

THE bedroom tax has been renamed the "nightmare tax" by Wendy Belsey.

The 60-year-old has lived in her three-bedroom semi-detached home in Thanet, to which her three children and grandson are frequent visitors, for 12 years.

But she says that having to find an extra £22.23 a week is making it incredibly hard to manage.

"If it wasn't for my family, I'd starve," said Ms Belsey, who worked at Asda until she developed both arthritis and spondylosis.

"We are a very close family and they keep me sane. But I do struggle. Bills and food is a very tight budget.

"I don't have a lot left for food. I don't drink or smoke and I can't remember the last time I went out."

And she says that were she to move she would lose something that is very special to her.

"I've got a lovely home and it's all I have – it's my life," said Miss Belsey, who is divorced.

"It's my home and my children's home, and they can come and stay. It's a personal thing I've done myself.

"I rely on medication to even move, but I feel like I have committed a crime by being ill. They might as well put something around my ankles.

"This government lives in cuckoo land. They wouldn't know reality if it hit them in the face.

"David Cameron backs up Maria Miller [former culture secretary], but I would like to see how he would live on £70 a week."

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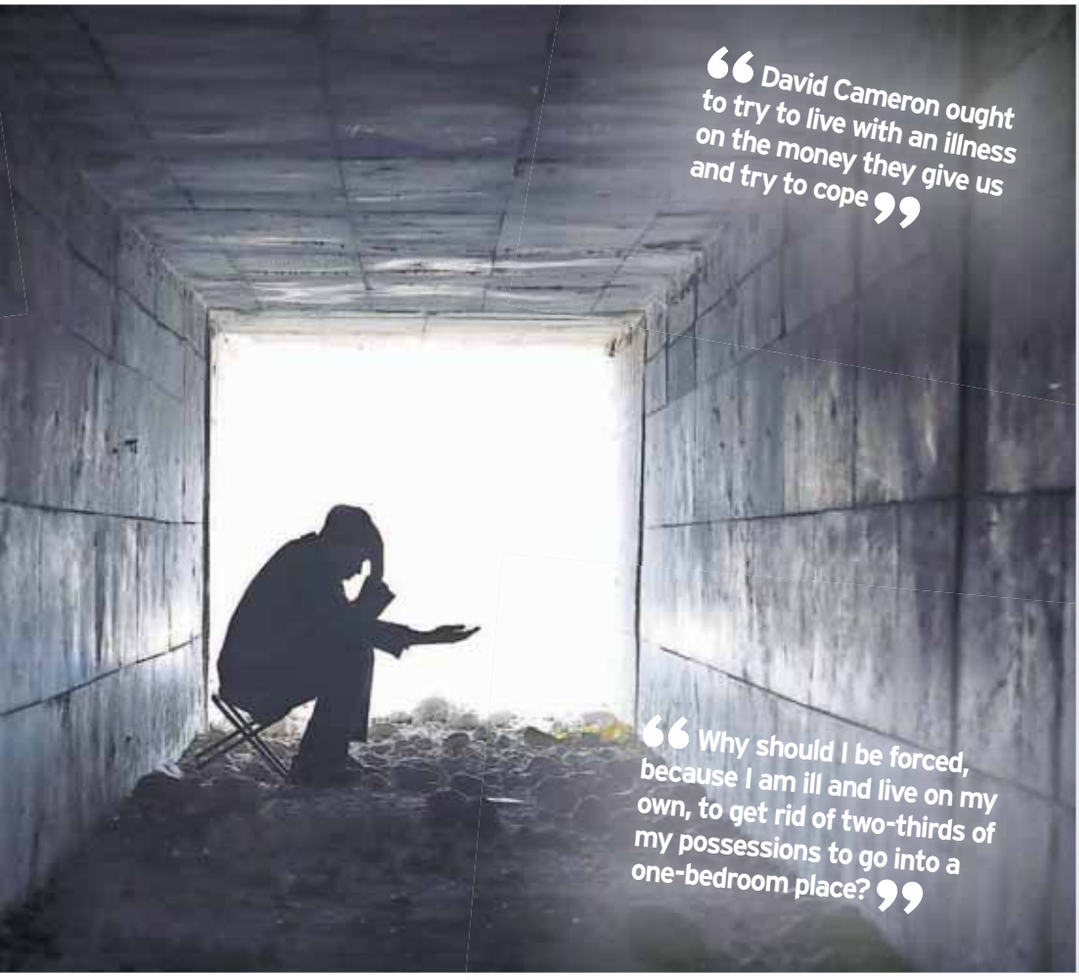

CASE STUDY: THREE

“I WAS going without meals,” says one tenant affected by the bedroom tax who did not want KoS to use her name.

The 53-year-old, who lives in a three-bedroom house in the Dover district, found herself struggling desperately after being whacked with a benefit cut of £25 a week.

The former classroom assistant, office worker, dinner lady and kitchen assistant suffers from a number of health problems, including severe Crohn’s disease, which have meant she has had to give up work.

She says she needs the extra space at home to look after her autistic grandson, who is 11 years old and often comes to stay with her so his mother can have a break.

“Sometimes all I was having during the day was two pieces of toast, one at lunchtime and one at 6pm,” she said.

“If I can’t look after my grandson they will have to pay for him to go into respite care, which is going to cost them a lot more than the bedroom tax.

“Where I am now, I have the support of neighbours and friends around me – people who know when to send me to hospital in an ambulance.

“But the Government is saying I have to move away from family and friends and be isolated.

“Why should I be forced, because I am ill and live on my own, to get rid of two-thirds of my possessions to go into a one-bedroom place?

“I’ve paid to decorate the house – when I was allocated a council property, it was for life.”

Fortunately, she has been given a discretionary housing payment to tide her over until mid-July and hopes after that she will be able to receive a personal independence payment, which helps with some of the costs of long-term ill-health or disability.

But it is clear from talking to her that she is anxious about how she will manage if that benefit is turned down.

“This is the Government’s way of being nasty.

“I always went to work until it became impossible for me to continue,” she said.

“David Cameron ought to try to live with an illness on the money they give us and try to cope.

“It’s been in the news that an MP has done it for a week, but at the end of the week they go back to their nice posh house where the cupboards are full.

“They should try doing it for six months. That is reality.”

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RACING CERTS: John Surtess, pictured right, was joined by fellow drivers Scott Malvern, above left, and Robbie Kerr on bank holiday

From front of the grid to high-street gridlock for motorsport legend

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

TWO weeks, four wheels and free wills – not much daunts racing legend John Surtees OBE, and who was really going to stop him driving a collection of Formula One cars through town?

On Monday the motorsport superstar managed to bring Edenbridge town centre to a standstill.

Locals turned out in their thousands to see Mr Surtees, the only man in history to win world championships on both two and four wheels, and his cavalcade of motor-racing glory roar through the town.

Despite losing his son Henry, 18, in a tragic F2 accident at Brands Hatch in 2009, when he was hit in the head by a wheel from another car, Mr Surtees is keen to promote the sport.

Appalling weather couldn't dampen the spirits as spectators lined the streets to watch the unusual parade.

Mr Surtees was joined by ex-Formula Renault and British Formula Ford champion Scott Malvern and ex-Formula Three British champion and A1 Grand Prix racer Robbie Kerr, roaring through the streets.

They were all, of course, behind the wheel of Team Surtees race vehicles.

Many years ago, Mr Surtees built his own cars, alongside such characters as Bruce McLaren and Sir Jack Brabham, who died last week and remains the only man to win the F1 title in a car he built himself.

The special event in Mr Surtee's home town helped commemorate the 50th anniversary of his Formula One World Championship title – as well as his 80th birthday.

The parade of his rarely-seen race cars and bikes ran twice through Edenbridge high street before returning to the site that was the Surtees team factory and business base for the past 56 years.

Mr Surtees led the parade in the Ferrari 158 that he drove to win the 1964 Formula One Drivers' World Championship. The car was loaned to him for the day by George Barber of Birmingham, Alabama, in the US.

It was followed by Team Surtees Formula One cars from the 70s and a procession of more than 200 classic bikes and cars all drawn to Edenbridge by the town's festivities.

The event was organised by the Eden Valley Chamber of Commerce as part of Edenbridge Fun Day and featured entertainment throughout the day, including bands, pram races, a dog show, trade stalls and a classic car and motorcycle display.

Mr Surtees said: "It's fantastic to have the high street closed on a busy bank holiday weekend so we could give all the visitors the sight and sound of Formula One and times gone by.

"It's not often that people get to hear and watch Formula One cars up close, and judging by the response of the crowds who cheered us through, they must've enjoyed it as much as I did."

Scott Malvern added: "It was an absolute honour to drive the TS7, the first Formula One car built by Team Surtees here in Edenbridge.

"I can't thank John Surtees enough for such an amazing opportunity – truly a day to remember."

When they were not shaking the windows in the town centre, the amazing collection of cars were on display outside the Bradford store in Station Road, where they were built and designed predominantly by local residents.

Joining the Ferrari 158 and TS7 was the TS14 Formula One, which was the first to be introduced to new safety regulations in 1972 and driven by Mike Hailwood and Carlos Pace in setting lap records in the German and Austrian Grand Prix.

Other cars in the cavalcade were the TS15 two-litre Formula Two car built in 1973 that finished second in that championship – it was the prototype that won the prestigious Interlagos race in Brazil driven by Pace.

Peter Kingham, chairman of the Eden Valley Chamber of Commerce, said: "It has always been our intention to make this an annual event centring on the town's racing construction heritage.

"The rain certainly did not dampen the spirits of the event – the streets were packed with visitors, many of whom had made a long journey to watch the Team Surtees parade.

"Personally, I would like to thank John Surtees for all the help and effort he, his staff and friends put into making it such a great day and to the Ferrari Owners' Club for their support."

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GARY LINEKER

EXCLUSIVE VERDICT FROM ENGLAND'S RECORD WORLD CUP GOALSCORER

ABOVE: Adam Lallana has emerged as a real talent

LEFT: Daniel Sturridge shows his goalscoring instinct in the friendly against Denmark

RIGHT: Ross Barkley has drawn comparisons to Paul Gascoigne

Young Lions are not quite ready to roar

ENGLAND winning the World Cup in Brazil would be a staggering success, wouldn't it? I think, though, we all know that is highly unlikely and, going into the tournament, all of our expectations are reasonable.

Saying that, I think we look in a much better place than six months ago with the emergence of so many young players with lots of talent.

These guys have shown in the Premier League that they can keep the ball well, which is the kind of football you need to play in a country like Brazil.

Let's be realistic – no European team has ever won the World Cup in South America and it will be very difficult for an England side who plays like we do to actually win it. If we get to the quarter-finals, then that would be a pretty good effort and anything beyond that would be punching above our weight.

I believe England are a side very much in transition from the so-called 'Golden Generation', with most of those either finished or coming to the end of their career, and a group who have not reached their prime yet.

So we have got to be realistic and sensible. This World Cup will be about nurturing young talent, letting them off the leash and telling them to go for it and enjoy it and not putting too much pressure on.

What Roy Hodgson will have with this England squad is a group of genuinely exciting young players, we have seen them nurtured brilliantly at clubs like Liverpool and Southampton.

These players are ones who are not stained by previous World Cups – they are not scarred by losing a penalty shootout!

That could prove a big advantage, and that energy they will bring to the group could be very important.

People will, of course, argue these guys do not have enough experience: but you are either an international footballer or you are not.

We have guys like Adam Lallana, who is not actually that young, but has emerged recently in an excellent Southampton side, and Raheem Sterling, who is a breathtaking footballer.

Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers says he is the best young talent in Europe, and I do not think he was exaggerating as he is certainly right up there.

Then you have his Anfield team-mate Daniel Sturridge, who has come on as a proven goalscorer, and has got that degree of arrogance which you absolutely need to score goals in that position.

Another player to have come on beautifully under Rodgers at Liverpool is Jordan Henderson. He is someone who has a great engine which will be vitally important, and technically he can play.

Then you have Everton's Ross Barkley, and for me he is a massive talent. Like Sterling, he can go past people and helps give England those things which we have been lacking. Age is not the slightest bit important if you are good enough, because in that squad you have got a couple of wise old heads around – like captain Steven Gerrard for one.

I really feel Barkley could emerge as a potential star of the tournament, and I can see certain things in his game like my old friend Paul Gascoigne. He is incredibly strong, and I think he has got a similar stature to Gazza, with that ability to score amazing goals.

I guess on the defensive side, yes, he is probably lacking in terms of tactical nous. But if you play him in a certain position then that wouldn't necessarily be that important.

So while I am not going to say Barkley is 'the next Gazza', I think there are two or three who could impress on the big stage as Gazza did for us at Italia '90.

As I have already said, Sterling is a phenomenal talent and has shown consistency to play in a number of positions, which is incredible for one so inexperienced.

Lallana is another who is a beautiful footballer. He lacks a slight bit of pace, but he is wonderfully gifted with both feet and keeps the ball so well which is so important.

I touched on Sturridge already, whom I think could comfortably emerge and become a star of this World Cup.

But, just like for us in Italy all those years ago, things have to come together.

Things you don't find out until the tournament is whether these guys can cope with the pressures of playing against the world's greatest players, or with the unbelievable microscope which is on you, especially from your own country, even if the expectation this year is not what is has been.

A lot of our young players have not been able to cope with all that in the past, but this lot seem to be coping admirably for their clubs in the Premier League, so let's find out.

Just what team Roy will put out against Italy in Manaus remains to be seen, but while that opening fixture of a World Cup is of course important, history tells us you can do reasonably well without winning your first game. I should know, because in Mexico 1986 we lost our first game to Portugal!

So, while it is not a must-win fixture to go through, losing it would make it very difficult to qualify out of what is always going to be a tight group.

■ **Gary Lineker was talking to Jim van Wijk**

BBC

Gary Lineker will lead the BBC's TV coverage of the finals and will be joined by Rio Ferdinand, Thierry Henry and Clarence Seedorf

ENGLAND at a glance

Joe Hart (Man City)
Deserves immense credit for the way he bounced back after being dropped by his club last autumn.

Ben Foster (West Brom)
Yet to rediscover his pre-injury form, but still the best back-up to Hart.

Fraser Forster (Celtic)
Beat John Ruddy and Jack Butland to the final keeper's spot.

Glen Johnson (Liverpool)
Kyle Walker's injury leaves Johnson, who has excelled since returning to fitness, as clear first-choice right-back.

Leighton Baines (Everton)
Had a superb season with Everton. Deservedly now first-choice for his country.

Luke Shaw (Southampton)
Talented teenager picked ahead of his boyhood idol, Ashley Cole.

Phil Jagielka (Everton)
One of the key men behind Everton's push for Champions League football.

Gary Cahill (Chelsea)
So good this year he has outshone John Terry and kept David Luiz out of the Chelsea back four.

Phil Jones (Man United)
Fit to be selected despite a shoulder injury. Versatility ensures his selection.

Chris Smalling (Man United)
Not in the greatest form, but has always been in Roy Hodgson's thoughts.

Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (Arsenal)
Showed how dangerous he can be with his goal against Brazil in the Maracana.

Jack Wilshere (Arsenal)
Another stop-start season due to injuries, but still one of England's most talented players for a long time.

Frank Lampard (Chelsea)
The best years are behind the vice-captain, but he has an important role to play.

Jordan Henderson (Liverpool)
Forced his way into the reckoning with an oustanding season.

Steven Gerrard (captain, Liverpool)
Adapted successfully to playing a deeper role, which allows him to dictate tempo of the game and spray dangerous through-balls.

Ross Barkley (Everton)
Supremely talented and capable of stunning goals.

James Milner (Man City)
Mr Versatile of the England squad, he works tirelessly.

Raheem Sterling (Liverpool)
The answer to Hodgson's attacking prayers after Theo Walcott's knee injury.

Adam Lallana (Southampton)
Nominated for the Player of the Year award for his fine season.

Wayne Rooney (Man United)
England's biggest threat if, as expected, his groin issue clears up. Can he finally score his first goal at his third World Cup?

Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool)
Responsible for a fifth of Liverpool's goals this term. Now needs to produce the goods on the international stage.

Danny Welbeck (Man United)
Injury to Jay Rodriguez rubber-stamped his place in the squad.

Rickie Lambert (Southampton)
Not just a target man, the 32-year-old has provided 10 assists as well as scoring 13 times for Saints this season.

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It's all on Neymar to rekindle

Left: Pele after Brazil's 1970 final win over Italy

Above: Much is expected of Neymar

Right: A nightmare scenario would see Lionel Messi lift the World Cup in Rio

By Mark Staniforth

FROM samba stars to sunshine football, whole shanty-towns of cliches have clung to the 2014 World Cup finals since it was confirmed the competition would return to Brazil after 64 years.

Five-time winners they may be, but there is only one group of players that has truly come to symbolise the majesty of the Selecao. And once Brazil got the nod for 2014, evocations of the unforgettable 1970 squad were not short in coming: the goalscoring exploits of Jairzinho; the angled drives of Carlos Alberto; the flawless magic of Pele, who bestrode the successful bid like Christ the Redeemer itself.

Football folk around the globe revelled in visions of the ultimate football experience, a 32-team finals stretching from the shores of the Copacabana to the Amazon jungle; a month-long feast of round-the-clock sunny-side-up football.

But no sooner had the FIFA carnival hitched up and left town, taking their "sun, sand and soccer" soundbites with them, such idealised visions were quickly replaced by the harsh reality of the physical and economic costs of hosting the games.

Violent clashes marred Brazil's hosting of the Confederations Cup in July last year and protests of various sizes have persisted across the host cities, while building delays have at times left the suitability of various venues in serious doubt.

It was hardly the kind of vision that the cliche-mongers had in mind, and for all the Brazilians' undoubted ability to put on a party, it has created the kind of societal fissures which are unlikely to be plastered over in time for the big kick-off on June 12.

Nevertheless, one senses that the decades of unrivalled glory Brazil has brought to the global game has created a situation where the world is willing it to succeed, to lay foundations which could yield more seminal moments such as those seen in 1970. The onus is evidently on the players themselves, not least a host team for whom even victory will never quite be enough – it is required to go hand in hand with the kind of flair and swagger which has been second-nature to so many generations of Brazilian stars.

Consider the pressure on the likes of Neymar, the Barcelona striker who was integral in his nation's Confederations Cup success, and who has what it takes to go down with the all-time greats if he can replicate that form on the biggest stage.

Such almighty expectation among a football-crazy nation of almost 200 million can hardly be tempered by the knowledge that if Neymar fails to hit the mark, the noisy neighbours could be the ones to fill his shoes.

Luis Suarez will lead Brazil's age-old rivals Uruguay into the finals as one of the most talented and controversial stars in the business, and will no doubt relish the prospect of tormenting the hosts on home soil. Neymar's Barcelona team-mate Lionel Messi is another World Cup

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the spirit of 1970

winner waiting to happen, and there is surely nothing worse for the Brazilian nation to countenance than the idea of the man dubbed the 'New Maradona' lifting the trophy for Argentina in Rio.

The European challenge will be headed by holders Spain, Arjen Robben's Netherlands, who blazed through the qualification process with nine wins from 10 games, and Portugal, eager to prove they are more than Ballon d'Or winner Cristiano Ronaldo's one-man show.

Roy Hodgson's England approach the finals almost refreshed from the lack of expectation which swirls around his relatively young squad following the torment and tribulations of the 2010 campaign. Such slim hopes – after a group stage draw which placed them alongside Uruguay and Italy as well as Costa Rica – ought not disguise the fact that Hodgson has a number of stars who are the equal of any others on a given day.

It would be wrong to imply that a sixth World Cup triumph for the host nation would provide some kind of instant, celebratory solution for the economic woes of those driven to take to the streets to protest the spiralling cost of the finals.

When the World Cup roadshow has left town there will still be those shanty-towns poking up off the hillsides around Rio.

But there can be no doubt the sight of Neymar and Co lifting the trophy would apply some significant balm. They claimed football came home in 1996. If that is so then this summer it is heading off on holiday, and only time will tell if it is staying for keeps.

Who would you pick for your World Cup XI?

SURELY it would be the easiest job in football? Fancy being in charge of a team like this! *writes Mark Tattersall.*

But first, of course, you have to pick your team. Given the choice of all the gifted stars appearing at this summer's World Cup, who would you leave out?

Everybody will have their favourites, but here is how our selection panel came to a decision.

Goalkeeper wasn't too difficult, with Iker Casillas and Gianlugi Buffon on the wane, so Manuel Neuer gets the nod over the Belgium's Thibaut Courtois.

In defence our first rule is that all world teams should have an Italian defender, so Giorgio Chillieni is the pick alongside Brazil captain Thiago Silva. Another Brazilian, Dani Alves, and German captain Philipp Lahm are the full-backs.

In a 4-2-3-1 formation, there can surely be no argument about the two central midfielders, Yaya Toure and Andrea Pirlo. At first glance, the front four looks obvious. Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo are nailed-on selections, and Luis Suarez's form makes him an easy pick, too.

For the fourth spot, we agonised over Eden Hazard, Xavi, Arturo Vidal, Thomas Muller, Franck Ribery, Arjen Robben, Neymar and Sergio Aguero, but decided there had to be at least one representative of the defending champions, and who better than 2010 World Cup final match-winner, Andres Iniesta.

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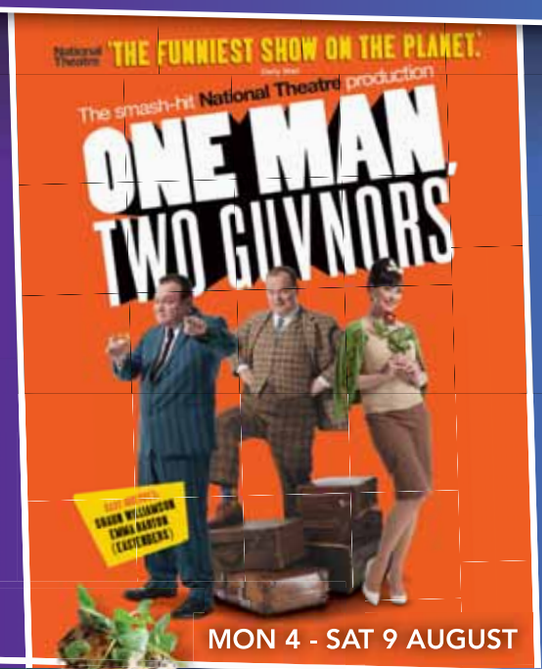

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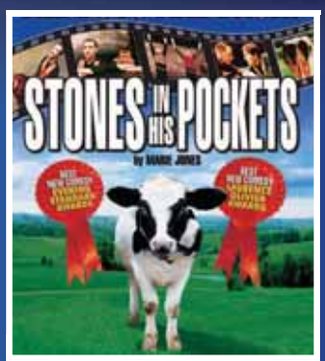

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Hodgson the miracle man is on a mission

By Paul Hirst

IT seemed fitting, after almost half a century of failure, that the FA turned to a man who once claimed to have turned water into wine when they selected Fabio Capello's successor two years ago.

Ever since Sir Alf Ramsey led the Three Lions to glory on that memorable day at Wembley in 1966, eight Englishmen, a Swede and an Italian have taken up the role of England manager.

All have failed.

Sven-Goran Eriksson, the Swedish element of that decatet, had the best chance of stopping the rot.

Yes, Sir Bobby Robson took England to the semi-finals of Italia '90, and Terry Venables reach the last four of the European Championship six years later.

But neither had the luck to be working with the likes of the so-called 'Golden Generation' of the time.

Eriksson failed to get the best out of David Beckham, Paul Scholes and Michael Owen – among others – when it came to tournament time.

Had the FA took on another candidate – Roy Hodgson – when Kevin Keegan walked out on England in 2000, the story might have been different. We will never know.

What is for certain is that Hodgson, now two years into his spell as England manager, does not have such talented individuals at his disposal.

But that has not stopped his enthusiasm for the job. The Londoner loves a challenge. He always has.

That is why he upped sticks from the capital to Sweden as a 28-year-old to take over at little-known side Halmstads BK. They had only survived relegation by virtue of goal difference in 1975, but one year later their English manager led them to be Swedish champions. Hodgson refers to it as his "water into wine job". Few Englishmen managed abroad in the 1970s, but Hodgson had no hesitation applying for the job.

For Hodgson, born August 9, 1947 into a modest home in Croydon, south London, was never afraid to stand out from the crowd.

While his school-mates were intoxicated by the revolutionary tones of the Rolling Stones, Hodgson's teenage years were spent listening to the likes of Timi Yuro, an American soul singer.

He was never afraid of bucking the trend. That is why he headed for Switzerland after his Scandinavian adventure, taking over the national side after a brief spell with Neuchatel Xamax.

Hodgson's work with the Swiss was near-miraculous, too. He took the nation to their first World Cup in 28 years in 1994, when they reached the second round. At one time Switzerland were ranked third in the world.

A turbulent time at Inter Milan followed. Hodgson took a poor team to the UEFA Cup final in 1997, but after being pelted by coins and lighters following the Nerazzurri's loss to Schalke, he was forced out.

More globe-trotting followed. Hodgson flitted from Blackburn, to Copenhagen to the United Arab Emirates, before returning to England with Fulham.

This time his work was given a much more English-sounding moniker – the Great Escape, leading Fulham away from relegation after taking over when the west London club were two points inside the drop zone.

He then succeeded in taking Fulham to a higher level – the Europa League final to be precise. Volcanic ash clouds, injuries and an 18-match run through the competition would not stop Hodgson taking Fulham to the final in Hamburg, where they lost to Atletico Madrid deep into extra-time.

An unsuccessful six-month spell at Liverpool did not put the FA off appointing Hodgson as national manager in 2012.

It is easy to see why. Hodgson is regarded as one of the best coaches in the game.

His globe-trotting has enabled him to speak five languages fluently, he has sat on UEFA technical committees and there are few players who have spoken negatively about their time working under him.

He is an engaging character, whose intelligence comes across clearly on camera. His favourite authors include Philip Roth, John Updike, Milan Kundera and Hermann Hesse.

Some mistake his laid-back appearances in front of the media for a lack of passion. But do not be fooled. Cuddly old Uncle Roy does not exist.

Just ask the Inter Milan press officer who Hodgson once pinned to the wall by the scruff of his neck during his time at the San Siro.

Ask Jamie Carragher and he will tell you the same.

"People think of Roy Hodgson as that nice 'good old Uncle Roy' fella'. But I've seen him lose his temper in the dressing room," said the former Liverpool captain.

That is good news for England, whose young guns may need a sharp reminder of their responsibilities next month.

The thousands of fans who travel to South America this summer, and the millions who watch on TV, will be hoping this will be the year when Hodgson pulls off his latest miracle, for that is what England need to end 48 years of hurt.

FACTFILE Roy Hodgson

Born
9 Aug 1947, Croydon

Playing career
Crystal Palace
Appearances 0
Goals 0

Non-League: Tonbridge Angels, Gravesend & Northfleet, Maidstone Utd, Ashford Town, Berea Park, Carshalton Athletic.

International teams

1992–1995	Switzerland
2002–2004	UAE
2006–2007	Finland
2012–	England

Clubs managed

1976–1980	Halmstads
1980–1982	Bristol C (asst)
1982	Bristol City
1982	IK Oddevold
1983–1984	Orebro
1985–1989	Malmo
1990–1992	Neuchatel Xamax
1995–1997	Inter Milan
1997–1998	Blackburn
1999	Inter (caretaker)
1999–2000	Grasshoppers
2000–2001	FC Copenhagen
2001	Udinese
2004–2005	Viking
2007–2010	Fulham
2010–2011	Liverpool
2011–2012	West Brom

Wayne Rooney has a vision of lifting the World Cup one day

'Pele' label was curse for Rooney

SVEN-GORAN ERIKSSON was to blame for many of England's failures during his time in charge of the national side, but one that often goes unnoticed is his decision to publicly proclaim Wayne Rooney as the new Pele.

As Eriksson sat down to address the media in the bowels of the newly-refurbished Estadio da Luz on June 21 2004, he used Rooney's name in the same breath as the best footballer of all time.

"I don't remember anyone making such a big impact on a tournament since Pele in the 1958 World Cup... he's a complete footballer," said the then England manager.

The Swede was flush with emotion after watching Rooney fire England into the quarter-finals of Euro 2004 with a well-taken double against Croatia. His first – a 20-yard screamer that totally bamboozled the Croatian goalkeeper – and his second, a calm finish following a deep run that began inside his own hal, were top-class strikes.

The two Rooney scored against Switzerland were also impressive.

He became the youngest scorer in European Championship history with his first, just as Pele became the youngest to find the net in World Cup history against Switzerland in 1958.

Eriksson meant his comments as a compliment, but instead those words have weighed heavy on Rooney's shoulders ever since. Every time he puts on an England shirt at a major finals, he is weighed down by so much pressure it is like he is wearing a lead vest underneath the Three Lions which sit on his chest.

Rooney's only goal in the three major finals that he has played in since 2004 was two years ago in Euro 2012. That is a record Pele would wince at.

Will the real Wayne Rooney stand up in Brazil just as so many England fans want him to?

Rooney missed the last three games of Manchester United's season with a groin problem, which came a month after a toe injury which prevented him from kicking a ball properly, according to then manager David Moyes.

"This time I honestly feel good," said Rooney. "I have looked after myself as well as I can to be as fit as I can for this tournament. I will be ready. I'm looking forward to it."

Hodgson knows Rooney's physical and mental state will be key to his chances of success in the sweltering heat of Brazil. And the 66-year-old thinks this time Rooney will not fail.

"This is the perfect opportunity for him to prove to people around the world what we already know – that he is a gifted footballer, capable of playing in many positions and someone who is a leading light in his team, which is one of the best in the world," he said.

FACTFILE Wayne Rooney

Born
24 Oct 1985, Liverpool

Clubs
Everton
Appearances 48 (29)
Goals 17
Manchester United
Appearances 396 (45)
Goals 217

International debut
v Australia, February 2003

BRAZIL 2014 WORLD

GROUP A

June 12, 9pm, Sao Paulo — ITV
BRAZIL
CROATIA

June 13, 5pm, Natal — ITV
MEXICO
CAMEROON

June 17, 8pm, Fortaleza — BBC
BRAZIL
MEXICO

June 18, 11pm, Manaus — ITV
CAMEROON
CROATIA

June 23, 9pm, Brasilia — ITV
CAMEROON
BRAZIL

June 23, 9pm, Recife — ITV
CROATIA
MEXICO

GROUP A TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

GROUP B

June 13, 8pm, Salvador — BBC
SPAIN
NETHERLANDS

June 13, 11pm, Cuiaba — ITV
CHILE
AUSTRALIA

June 18, 8pm, Rio de Janeiro — BBC
SPAIN
CHILE

June 18, 5pm, Porto Alegre — ITV
AUSTRALIA
NETHERLANDS

June 23, 5pm, Curitiba — ITV
AUSTRALIA
SPAIN

June 23, 5pm, Sao Paulo — ITV
NETHERLANDS
CHILE

GROUP B TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

GROUP C

June 14, 5pm, Belo Horizonte — BBC
COLOMBIA
GREECE

June 15, 2am, Recife — ITV
IVORY COAST
JAPAN

June 19, 5pm, Brasilia — BBC
COLOMBIA
IVORY COAST

June 19, 11pm, Natal — BBC
JAPAN
GREECE

June 24, 9pm, Cuiaba — BBC
JAPAN
COLOMBIA

June 24, 9pm, Fortaleza — BBC
GREECE
IVORY COAST

GROUP C TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

GROUP D

June 14, 8pm, Fortaleza — ITV
URUGUAY
COSTA RICA

June 14, 11pm, Manaus — BBC
ENGLAND
ITALY

June 19, 8pm, Sao Paulo — ITV
URUGUAY
ENGLAND

June 20, 5pm, Recife — BBC
ITALY
COSTA RICA

June 24, 5pm, Natal — ITV
ITALY
URUGUAY

June 24, 5pm, Belo Horizonte — ITV
COSTA RICA
ENGLAND

GROUP D TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

ROUND OF 16

1. June 28, 5pm, Belo Horizonte
WINNER A
RUNNER-UP B

2. June 28, 9pm, Rio de Janeiro
WINNER C
RUNNER-UP D

3. June 29, 5pm, Fortaleza
WINNER B
RUNNER-UP A

4. June 29, 9pm, Recife
WINNER D
RUNNER-UP C

5. June 30, 5pm, Brasilia
WINNER E
RUNNER-UP F

6. June 30, 9pm, Porto Alegre
WINNER G
RUNNER-UP H

7. July 1, 5pm, Sao Paulo
WINNER F
RUNNER-UP E

8. July 1, 9pm, Salvador
WINNER H
RUNNER-UP G

QUARTER-FINALS

A. July 4, 9pm, Fortaleza
WINNER 1
WINNER 2

B. July 4, 5pm, Rio de Janeiro
WINNER 5
WINNER 6

C. July 5, 9pm, Salvador
WINNER 3
WINNER 4

D. July 5, 5pm, Brasilia
WINNER 7
WINNER 8

SEMI-FINALS

July 8, 9pm, Belo Horizonte
WINNER A
WINNER B

July 9, 9pm, Sao Paulo
WINNER C
WINNER D

3RD/4TH PLAY-OFF

July 12, 9pm, Brasilia

All kick-off times are BST

WORLD CUP FINAL

July 13, 8pm, Rio de Janeiro — BBC/ITV

CUP WALLCHART

GROUP E

June 15, 5pm, Brasilia	ITV	
SWITZERLAND		
ECUADOR		
June 15, 8pm, Porto Alegre	BBC	
FRANCE		
HONDURAS		
June 20, 8pm, Salvador	ITV	
SWITZERLAND		
FRANCE		
June 20, 11pm, Curitiba	ITV	
HONDURAS		
ECUADOR		
June 25, 9pm, Manaus	BBC	
HONDURAS		
SWITZERLAND		
June 25, 9pm, Rio de Janeiro	BBC	
ECUADOR		
FRANCE		

GROUP F

June 15, 11pm, Rio de Janeiro	BBC	
ARGENTINA		
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA		
June 16, 8pm, Curitiba	BBC	
IRAN		
NIGERIA		
June 21, 5pm, Belo Horizonte	ITV	
ARGENTINA		
IRAN		
June 21, 11pm, Cuiaba	BBC	
NIGERIA		
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA		
June 25, 5pm, Porto Alegre	ITV	
NIGERIA		
ARGENTINA		
June 25, 5pm, Salvador	ITV	
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA		
IRAN		

GROUP G

June 16, 5pm, Salvador	ITV	
GERMANY		
PORTUGAL		
June 16, 11pm, Natal	BBC	
GHANA		
UNITED STATES		
June 21, 8pm, Fortaleza	BBC	
GERMANY		
GHANA		
June 22, 11pm, Manaus	BBC	
UNITED STATES		
PORTUGAL		
June 26, 5pm, Recife	BBC	
UNITED STATES		
GERMANY		
June 26, 5pm, Brasilia	BBC	
PORTUGAL		
GHANA		

GROUP H

June 17, 5pm, Belo Horizonte	ITV	
BELGIUM		
ALGERIA		
June 17, 11pm, Cuiaba	BBC	
RUSSIA		
KOREA REPUBLIC		
June 22, 5pm, Rio de Janeiro	BBC	
BELGIUM		
RUSSIA		
June 22, 8pm, Porto Alegre	ITV	
KOREA REPUBLIC		
ALGERIA		
June 26, 9pm, Sao Paulo	ITV	
KOREA REPUBLIC		
BELGIUM		
June 26, 9pm, Curitiba	ITV	
ALGERIA		
RUSSIA		

GROUP E TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

GROUP F TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

GROUP G TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

GROUP H TABLE

Team	Pts
1	
2	
3	
4	

WORLD CUP WINNERS

1930	URUGUAY
1934	ITALY
1938	ITALY
1950	URUGUAY
1954	WEST GERMANY
1958	BRAZIL
1962	BRAZIL
1966	ENGLAND
1970	BRAZIL
1974	WEST GERMANY
1978	ARGENTINA
1982	ITALY
1986	ARGENTINA
1990	WEST GERMANY
1994	BRAZIL
1998	FRANCE
2002	BRAZIL
2006	ITALY
2010	SPAIN

GOLDEN BOOT WINNERS

1930	Guillermo Stabile	(Uruguay)	8
1934	Oldrich Nejedly	(Czech)	5
1938	Leonidas da Silva	(Brazil)	7
1950	Ademir	(Brazil)	8
1954	Sandor Kocsis	(Hungary)	11
1958	Just Fontaine	(France)	13
1962	Florian Albert	(Hungary)	4
	Valentin Ivanov	(Soviet Union)	4
	Garrincha	(Brazil)	4
	Vava	(Brazil)	4
	Drazan Jerkovic	(Yugoslavia)	4
	Leonel Sanchez	(Chile)	4
1966	Eusebio	(Portugal)	9
1970	Gerd Muller	(West Germany)	10
1974	Grzegorz Lato	(Poland)	7
1978	Mario Kempes	(Argentina)	6
1982	Paolo Rossi	(Italy)	6
1986	Gary Lineker	(England)	6
1990	Toto Schillachi	(Italy)	6
1994	Oleg Salenko	(Russia)	6
	Hristo Stoichkov	(Bulgaria)	6
1998	Davor Suker	(Croatia)	6
2002	Ronaldo	(Brazil)	8
2006	Miroslav Klose	(Germany)	5
2010	Thomas Muller	(Germany)	5

From left: Wayne Rooney (England), Andres Iniesta (Spain), Lionel Messi (Argentina), Cristiano Ronaldo (Portugal), Neymar (Brazil)

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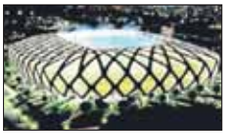
Your guide to the dozen stadiums and cities around Brazil that will host all the World Cup 2014 action

1. Arena Amazonia, Manaus, 42,374
In the Amazon rainforest, where humidity can reach 99 per cent in summer.



2. Estadio Castelao, Fortaleza, 58,704
Famous for tourism, beaches, delicious seafood and a unique carnival.

3. Estadio das Dunas, Natal, 42,086
Completely rebuilt, the stadium's roof is designed in the shape of petals.

4. Arena Pernambuco, Recife, 44,248
Newly-built home to three historic clubs, Nautico, Santa Cruz and Sport.

5. Arena Fonte Nova, Salvador, 52,048
A new complex featuring a museum of football, shops, hotels and a concert hall.

6. Arena Pantanal, Cuiaba, 42,968
South of the rainforest, but temperatures can go above 40C and it is humid.

7. Estadio Nacional Mane Garrincha, Brasilia, 68,009
Named after former Brazil star Garrincha, an icon of the 1950s and 1960s.

8. Estadio Mineirao, Belo Horizonte, 57,483
Where the great Ronaldo began his career with the Cruzeiro club.

9. Maracana, Rio de Janeiro, 73,531
Arguably the most iconic stadium in world football, and hosts the final.

10. Arena Corinthians, Sao Paulo, 65,000
A city known as Terra da Garoa (Land of Drizzle) because of persistent rain.

11. Arena da Baixada, Curitiba, 41,456
Built in 1914, but refurbished in 1999 and again for this World Cup.

12. Estadio Beira-Rio, Porto Alegre, 48,849
On the banks of the River Guaiba, and home to Internacional and Gremio.

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All eyes on Lallana

By Paul Hirst

CHARLES MILLER returned to Sao Paulo with a ball, a pair of boots and a rulebook.

The young Brazilian was sent by his parents to Southampton for school and a decade later returned to his homeland having learned one key lesson: football.

Miller introduced the beautiful game to Brazil in 1894 and is considered the father of football in the country so synonymous with the beautiful game.

The sport is a national obsession and this summer a city inextricably linked with its boon in South America will have an impact once more.

Only 17 clubs in world football had more players represented across the 32 provisional squads than Southampton, who have players representing Japan, France, Croatia, Uruguay as well as three with England. Precociously-talented teenager Luke Shaw and frontman Rickie Lambert form part of Roy Hodgson's squad, but it is academy graduate Adam Lallana whose talents will be most appreciated by the home crowd.

The 26-year-old is a creative force, a player that likes nothing more than to be running past players, fooling opponents with deft touches and beating goalkeepers.

Lallana's skills are unbecoming of an English player and may well see him start the Group D opener against Italy, little more than half a year after making his international debut.

"I've never been to Brazil or to anywhere as far from my country as that, so to be going out there to play football in a tournament is unbelievable," he said. "I just can't wait. I grew up watching Brazil play and they are always spoken about as a nation of flair, so it's a special country for footballers.

"I'm proud that, when my son grows up, he will be able to watch DVDs of his dad playing football at a World Cup in Brazil.

"I think the squad is strong. The optimism should be really high among the lads. There a lot of young players in there like Shawy, Raheem Sterling, Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and a couple on the standby list as well, so that's good for English football.

"Hopefully we can go into the tournament with a no-fear attitude because that can only help us. To be out there with Lukey and Lambo, my two team-mates, is so special. I hope we'll flourish together."

There is no chance they will leave a legacy like Miller, but for a few weeks at least there will once again be a Southampton flavour in the South American heartland.

Adam Lallana is on target to start against Italy, little over half a year since making his England debut

Five great England memories

Portugal, semi-final Wembley 1966
England had come through a dour and ill-tempered quarter-final against Argentina but proved they really were one of the best teams in the world with a magnificent win over a Eusebio-inspired Portugal. Bobby Charlton was outstanding, scoring two goals in perhaps his finest performance for his country.

West Germany, final Wembley 1966
England's finest hour, which has overshadowed the national team ever since. Geoff Hurst struck a hat-trick as England claimed the world crown with a 4-2 victory. Helmut Haller put the Germans ahead, but Hurst responded and Martin Peters added a second after 78 minutes. Wolfgang Weber forced extra-time in the last minute, but England claimed the advantage with a controversial Hurst shot which bounced down off the crossbar and was judged to have crossed the line. With fans spilling onto the pitch, Hurst completed his hat-trick in the dying seconds.

Cameroon, quarter-final Naples 1990
Two Gary Lineker penalties saw England through after a pulsating encounter. David Platt's first-half effort had put England on course, but the Africans turned the game on its head after the break with two goals in the space of four minutes. Lineker levelled with his first spot-kick after 83 minutes and then settled it in extra-time.

Germany, qualifying Munich 2001
Michael Owen scored a hat-trick as England produced one of their greatest performances to win 5-1 and move closer to qualification for 2002. Liverpool colleagues Steven Gerrard and Emile Heskey got the others.

Argentina, first round Sapporo 2002
A sweet win for England and David Beckham. After being knocked out by Argentina in 1986 and 1998 any win would be sweet, and Beckham, who had been sent off against them four years previously, had the last laugh with the winner.

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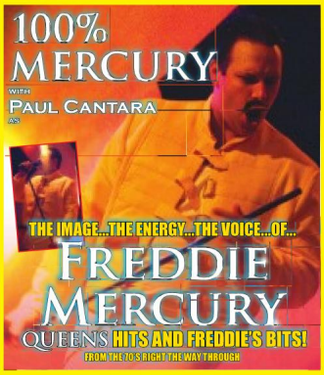

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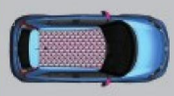

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Spotlight on the three rival nations bidding to stop England qualifying from Group D in Brazil

Now Immobile is on the move

By Cindy Bennett

Ciro Immobile has blossomed at Torino and finished this season as Serie A's top scorer

NOTHING is as valuable to a football player as experience.

Ciro Immobile needed a year of transition to Serie A before he could blossom into one of Italy's most lethal strikers.

Following a debut campaign in Italy's top flight in which he scored only five goals in 33 League appearances for Genoa and, after hearing criticism that he was not ready for the big time, Immobile has proved week-in and week-out this season at Torino that he does have what it takes.

The 24-year-old has finished as the "capocannoniere", the top scorer in Serie A with 22 goals in 33 League games and his performances helped Torino finish in seventh place.

He also made his senior debut with Italy in a friendly against world champions Spain in March.

"Last season he struggled, but Ciro has character," said Italy coach Cesare Prandelli.

"He has a striker's DNA and has not been affected by negative experiences. Many said he wasn't ready for Serie A, but now those critics praise him. He is doing very well."

The journey has not been easy for Immobile.

He joined Juventus in 2009, but had loan spells at Siena, Grossetto and Pescara. It was at the latter where his career began to take off.

He scored a Serie B record 28 goals to help Pescara finish top in the 2011-12 campaign and gain promotion before he joined Genoa.

"I will always remain a fan of Pescara," said Immobile. "It was my launchpad to top football."

Immobile's hopes of playing for Juve, the club that had signed him at the age of 18 for €80,000, were dashed when the Italian giants sold part of his rights to cross-town rivals Torino last summer.

"Despite my (Juve) past, I was welcomed in the Torino camp with a lot of enthusiasm, something I didn't expect," said Immobile.

"From a tactical and character standpoint, they have made me grow as a person and as a player."

Immobile forged a potent attacking partnership with Alessio Cerci at Torino, with his team-mate notching 13 goals and setting up 11 others in Serie A. Prandelli spoke during the season of Cerci's unselfishness and it was no surprise when he, too, made Italy's squad.

The year has been so good for Immobile that the Neapolitan has surpassed Torino greats Paolo Pulici and Francesco Graziani with a single season record of goals – neither had topped 21. "I think I am very similar to them in character and also in my mindset to always play my best," said Immobile.

"I have worked so hard to reach this level, but I never expected to have such a season. Even though we just missed out on qualifying for European football next season, our aim was for our fans to enjoy watching us play again. I think we have succeeded."

Immobile has raised plenty of eyebrows recently, and not just in Italy, with German side Borussia Dortmund, who will play in the Champions League next season, believed to be leading the chase to sign him this summer.

"It would be difficult to turn down an important offer from abroad," he added. "But, in the future, I would love to play for Napoli, my home club."

Italy

Coach Cesare Prandelli

Star man Andrea Pirlo (Juventus)

One to watch Mario Balotelli (AC Milan)

How they qualified European Group winners

World Cup record

1934	WINNERS
1938	WINNERS
1950	1st round
1954	1st round
1962	1st round
1966	1st round
1970	Runners-up
1974	1st round
1978	4th place
1982	WINNERS
1986	Round of 16
1990	3rd place
1994	Runners-up
1998	Q-finals
2002	Round of 16
2006	WINNERS
2010	1st round

FIFA ranking 9
Odds 25-1

Suarez and Cavani spearhead bid to repeat 1950 glory

TWO-TIME World Cup winners Uruguay return to the scene of their greatest triumph having endured now customary struggles in securing a place at the finals.

Even allowing for the gruelling nature of the South American section, La Celeste have a habit of making hard work of qualification.

Buoyed by their 2011 Copa America triumph, Uruguay made a flying start to the campaign, with three of their opening four home games in Montevideo producing four-goal victories.

Yet, despite sitting top of the standings with 11 points from five matches, the wheels came off dramatically for Oscar Tabarez's men.

A 4-0 thrashing away to Colombia began a run of six matches without a win before a relative recovery in the later rounds booked Uruguay into their fourth consecutive inter-continental play-off.

This familiarity with death-or-glory assignments over two legs stood them in fine stead as Jordan were demolished 5-0 during the opening game – a stellar forward line led by the lavish attacking talents of Luis Suarez and Edinson Cavani enjoying a field day in the Middle East.

A goalless draw at home completed the formality, and Tabarez will lead a group with undoubted pedigree when it comes to competing at the highest level.

Uruguay topped a group featuring France and Mexico at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa and muscled their way past South Korea and Ghana before missing out 3-2 in an enthralling semi-final against eventual runners-up Holland.

That superb run paved the way for continental glory a year later, and a narrow semi-final loss to hosts – and eventual winners – Brazil in the 2013 Confederations Cup once again showed La Celeste have little to fear against the world's best.

The current squad is an ageing one and it will be interesting to see how much the older members have left in the tank now their club duties concluded, while their mid-qualification slump offers a stark reminder of the vulnerabilities still present in the team.

Nevertheless, hopes remain high for the country that famously silenced the Maracana to pip Brazil to the 1950 World Cup in their own back yard.

Suarez and Co will be out to see that history repeats itself.

Uruguay

Coach Oscar Tabarez

Star man Luis Suarez (Liverpool)

How they qualified Intercontinental play-off

World Cup record

1930	WINNERS
1950	WINNERS
1954	4th place
1962	1st round
1966	Q-finals
1970	4th place
1974	1st round
1986	Round of 16
1990	Round of 16
2002	1st round
2010	4th place

FIFA ranking 5
Odds 25-1

Pinto's underdogs out to upset the odds

Keylor Navas is one of a number of European-based players for Costa Rica

COSTA RICA return to make their fourth World Cup finals appearance and coach Jorge Luis Pinto's youthful squad will be intent on springing a few surprises.

Little is expected of the Central American nation who are thrown into a daunting Group D line-up, but Jorge Luis Pinto's men should prove a wholly different proposition to the last Costa Rica team to reach the biggest stage eight years ago.

Los Ticos trudged home from the 2006 tournament in Germany without a point to their name – a double from flamboyant striker and national hero Paulo Wanchope in the opening match against the hosts one of few memorable moments.

The 2002 vintage also fell at the first hurdle, unable to emulate a World Cup debut at Italia '90 under globe-trotting coach Bora Milutinovic. Victories over Sweden and Scotland before elimination at the hands of Czechoslovakia in the round of 16 still represent a high for Costa Rican football.

Such a return this time around would make a mockery of pre-tournament oddsmakers, but a significant pool of European-based players means the pedigree Pinto has at his disposal should not be doubted.

Previous World Cup experience will be lacking – given Costa Rica's fortunes this century it is highly questionable whether that is a bad thing – but Fulham attacker Bryan Ruiz, Levante goalkeeper Keylor Navas and Olympiakos' on-loan Arsenal forward Joel Campbell lead a strong European contingent.

Twelve of these featured among the squad as Ruiz – who is temporarily plying his trade in Holland with PSV Eindhoven – and Real Salt Lake's Alvaro Saborio netted to see off Mexico in the final round of Concacaf matches, with qualification already secured. Such a relatively trouble-free passage to the finals was welcome in Costa Rica, given their 2010 play-off heartache at the hands of Uruguay – a factor that adds a delicious edge to the group opener in Fortaleza.

Uruguay, Italy and England will be priming themselves for a three-way scrap for places in the last 16 but, should they take their eye off the ball, Costa Rica might just possess the talent to capitalise.

Costa Rica

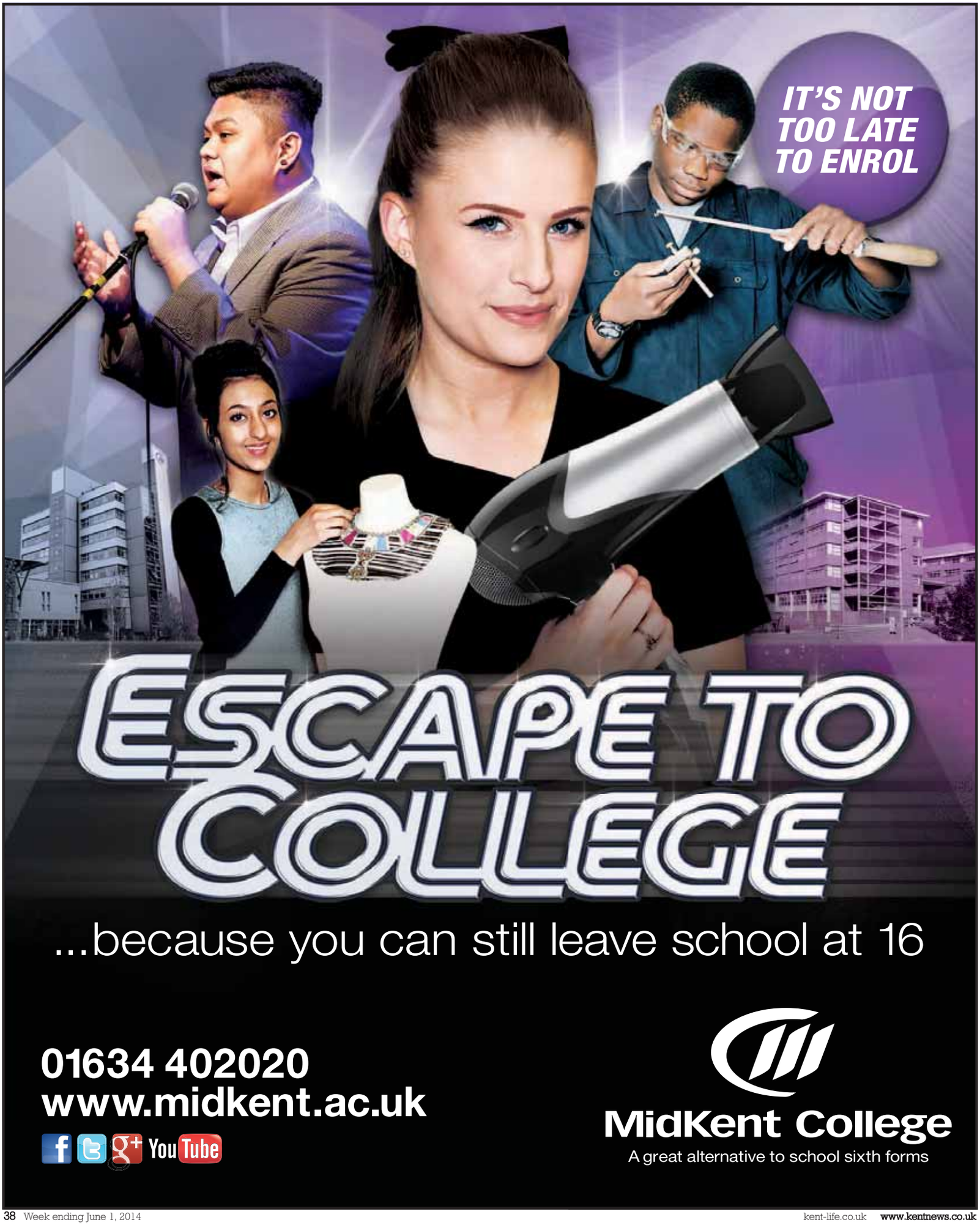
Star man Bryan Ruiz (Fulham)

How they qualified Second, Concacaf

World Cup record

1990	Round of 16
2002	1st round
2006	1st round

FIFA ranking 34
Odds 1,500-1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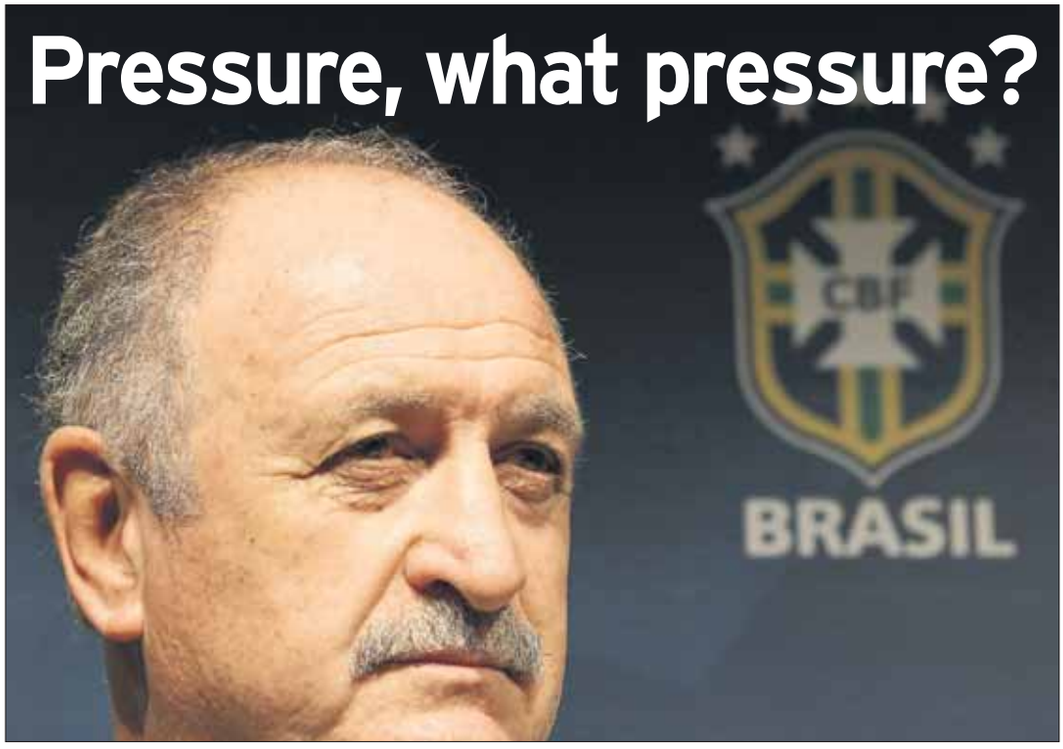
We *will* win it, vows Brazil boss Scolari



Luiz Felipe Scolari has boldly predicted his team will win the World Cup on home soil

LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI is "100 per cent convinced" he will be the first man to guide Brazil to World Cup glory on home turf.

The well-travelled coach is back in the job which made him famous and promising the Selecao will be crowned world champions for a sixth time on July 13.

No one really expected Scolari to succeed at the 2002 finals in Japan and South Korea.

Brazil had been under-par during qualification and needed a final-round win over Venezuela to reach the Far East, where Scolari had briefly managed Jubilo Iwata before returning to South America.

The preparations for that World Cup campaign were shrouded in mystery under a man who refused to pick superstar striker Romario and who regularly drip-fed misinformation about his personnel choices.

But months later, Brazil beat Germany 2-0 in the Yokohama final via talisman Ronaldo's brace.

Scolari's name was now inscribed alongside those of Vicente Feola, Aymore Moreira, Mario Zagallo and Carlos Alberto Parreira, but August brought his resignation and a new adventure in Europe.

Mixed experiences with Portugal, Chelsea and Bunyodkor of Uzbekistan preceded a return home to Palmeiras, where Scolari bided his time while Mano Menezes struggled in the Brazil hot-seat. Come November 2012, Scolari had replaced Menezes to come full circle – and this time things would be a little different.

There were no smoke and mirrors as Brazil set out to defend the Confederations Cup, a mission they completed in some style by dispatching world champions Spain 3-0 in the Maracana final. The Selecao were back on top and, when Scolari sat down to face reporters following a 5-0 demolition of Honduras last November, he asserted his belief that Brazil would soon rule the world once again.

"There is no pressure on us," he said. "Brazil are not under pressure to be the world champions. Brazil will be the champions. I would not have accepted the job if I didn't think we could win the World Cup.

"I would not be leading the team, I would be sitting at home. I took this job because I'm 100 per cent convinced that I will win the World Cup with Brazil."

If Scolari is to deliver on his ambitious promise – a pledge an expectant nation is treating with the utmost solemnity – then he must do so with a noticeably younger team than the one which triumphed in Japan 12 years ago.

At 34, goalkeeper Julio Cesar is the oldest member of squad that includes 22-year-old forwards Oscar and Neymar, and 21-year-old winger Bernard.

Scolari has already hinted his master plan involves combining the talents of his youngsters with the wiliness of old heads Fred, Maicon and Dani Alves, but inexperience remains a concern for fans.

He has, however, moved to assuage those fears.

"This team is much younger and lacks the experience of the 2002 squad," he said.

"But this group has a different dynamic and it's the type of dynamic required in football today."

Scolari has already done enough to secure a place in Brazilian folklore but, if he fails to keep his bold promise this summer, he is unlikely to get a third shot at winning the greatest prize in world football.

Ten of the best up-and-coming stars from around the world who are ready to take Brazil 2014 by storm

James Rodriguez (Colombia)
Not a household name here, but Colombia's 22-year-old playmaker is viewed as one of the most exciting talents in world football. Monaco paid 45million euros for him after three stellar seasons with Porto.

Mateo Kovacic (Croatia)
The gifted 19-year-old shone brightly in qualifying, showing the talent that persuaded Inter Milan to buy him last season. Arsenal, Chelsea and Manchester United have all been linked with the young midfielder.

Juan Fernando Quintero (Colombia)
Another in the line of Colombians who have gone through Porto, along with James Rodriguez and Radamel Falcao. Only 21, but his size and style have led to comparisons with Lionel Messi.

Son Heung-min (South Korea)
A support striker or attacking midfielder who has impressed in the Bundesliga first for Hamburg and then Bayer Leverkusen. Still only 21, he has almost a quarter of a century of international caps to his name.

Jefferson Montero (Ecuador)
A gifted left winger who has sparked interest from European clubs, even before the World Cup. Plays in Mexico for Monarcas Morelia, and both Arsenal and Swansea have been linked with moves for him.

Rodriguez

Kovacic

Quintero

Heung-min

Montero

The new kids on the block

Reyes

Najar

Green

Pjanic

Carvalho

Diego Reyes (Mexico)
Already viewed as his country's best defender, despite still only being 21. Seen as heir to the legendary Barcelona and Mexico defender Rafael Marquez. Already at Porto, great things are expected of him.

Andy Najar (Honduras)
A 21-year-old winger who plays in Belgium for Anderlecht after moving from Major League Soccer's DC United. Tottenham are reportedly interested, but his agent has insisted he will not move clubs this summer.

Julian Green (United States)
An 18-year-old forward who has chosen to represent USA after playing for Germany at youth level. Bayern Munich team-mate Arjen Robben said: "He's quick, he's got very good dribbling and can score goals".

Miralem Pjanic (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Has been a regular international since he was 18. He is now 23 and closing fast on 50 caps. His play-making abilities persuaded Roma to sign him from French football, and he starred as his country topped their qualifying group.

William Carvalho (Portugal)
One of the most-talked about young players in world football, the Angolan-born holding midfielder has attracted interest from Manchester United and Chelsea. Currently with Sporting Lisbon.

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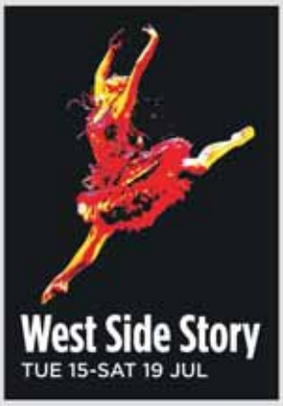
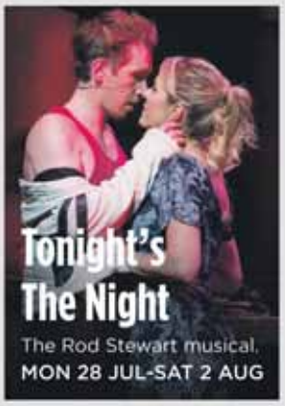
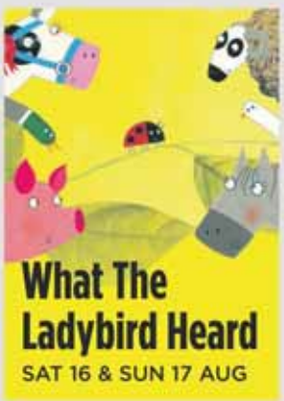


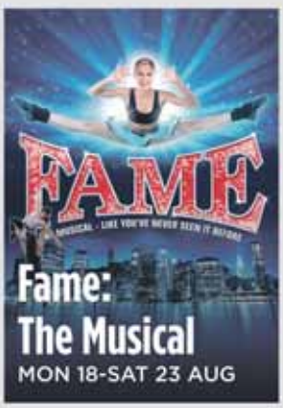
West Side Story
TUE 15-SAT 19 JUL



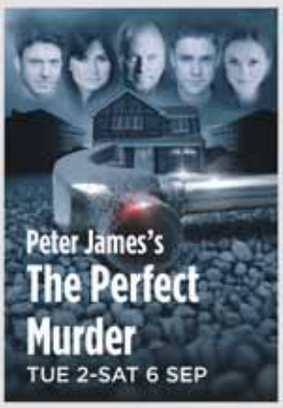
Tonight's The Night
The Rod Stewart musical.
MON 28 JUL-SAT 2 AUG



What The Ladybird Heard
SAT 16 & SUN 17 AUG

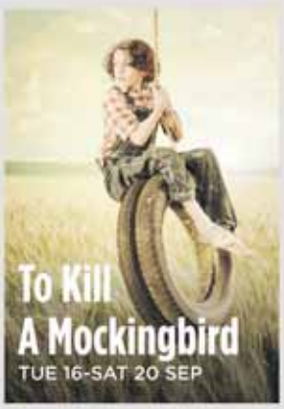


Fame: The Musical
MON 18-SAT 23 AUG

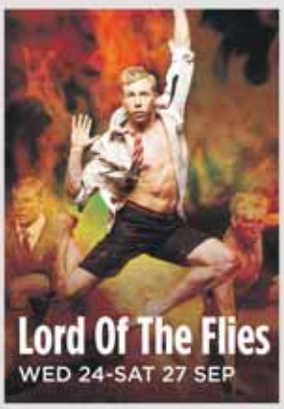


Peter James's
The Perfect Murder
TUE 2-SAT 6 SEP

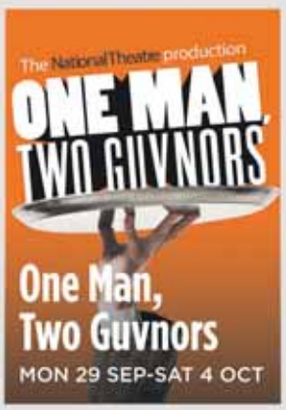
Felicity Kendal in
Hay Fever
MON 8-SAT 13 SEP



To Kill A Mockingbird
TUE 16-SAT 20 SEP



Lord Of The Flies
WED 24-SAT 27 SEP



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Medic needs your help saving young from killer heart disease

David Hatton hopes to save thousands of lives by researching one of Africa's biggest killers of children… but he needs support getting there, as **Jamie Weir** discovered

HELP: Chief cardiac physiologist David Hatton is hoping to visit Africa

A KENT heart specialist will be swapping his scrubs for a pair of shorts when he travels to South Africa to take part in medical research into one of Africa's biggest killers of children.

The Echo in Africa programme will be looking at new ways of detecting and treating rheumatic heart disease in children. More than 250,000 people die from the disease each year worldwide and it is the third-biggest heart illness-related killer in Africa.

Globally, more than 15.5 million people are living with it and many more go undiagnosed.

David Hatton normally works as the chief cardiac physiologist at the Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother (QEQM) hospital in Margate but is hoping to travel 7,000 miles to take part in the programme.

But first he needs your help to raise £2,000 in sponsorship.

The 32-year-old first got involved in the research on a professional level, but once he saw the project it also became about the humanitarian aspect.

Mr Hatton said: "Apart from the obvious research benefits, what really drew me in to the project was the help we will be able to give to some extremely deprived children.

"Many of the children I will examine simply wouldn't have access to this type of scanning otherwise, which could mean serious heart problems and even death later in life."

When asked what he was expecting, he said: "It's going to be a huge culture shock. I've never been to Africa before and certainly never worked in this type of environment.

"However, I'm confident that the same levels of care, compassion and professionalism will be the standard wherever I am in the world."

He praised his employer, the South East Hospital Trust, for being so supportive of the project, saying: "They have been so understanding and can see the benefit of the work, both in research terms and in the sense that I will be helping the community out there.

"We will be leaving a lasting legacy in the area as well. As part of the project, we have built a building specially designed for scanning. So when we leave, there will still be benefits to the people who live in the area."

His fiancée is also understanding of the trip, despite him having two young children.

Mr Hatton said: "Luckily, my fiancée works as a nurse, so she can appreciate the benefits of me going to Africa for eight weeks."

The Echo in Africa programme has been set up by the British Society of Echocardiography (BSE), with its president Dr Guy Lloyd one of the leaders of the project.

The research will be conducted in three schools in Cape Town, with the project aiming to screen children with hi-tech ultrasound scans.

The normal method for diagnosing rheumatic heart disease is to enquire about the patient's medical history and listen to the heart with a stethoscope. However, ultrasound scans have been shown to be up to 10 times more effective than traditional methods, but due to the cost they are less widely used.

The project will begin towards the end of July and last up to two years.

Mr Hatton is to research the frequency and severity of the disease among the children scanned. He will help build evidence of whether a hand-held echo device (like a portable ultrasound scan) is able to offer the same level of accuracy for the disease and also take part in trying to create a set of simple instructions and identifiers for the scanners.

This would enable untrained people to use the scanners in remote areas, removing the need for specialist medics.

■ **If you would like to help you can donate at www.virginmoneygiving.com/DaveHatton1.**

Cathedral gives praise as lottery grants £12m for restoration project

…but church has to raise £7.4m to get cash, writes **Jamie Weir**

LIKE manna from heaven, this week Canterbury Cathedral announced that it had secured Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF).

The cathedral – the Mother Church of the Anglican Communion – made the announcement on Tuesday after it was confirmed that it had secured almost £12 million from the funding scheme.

Parts of the cathedral – a Unesco world heritage site – have been in desperate need of repair for years, with reports that pillars were being held together with duct tape.

The grant will enable the necessary work while also allowing the cathedral to expand its offering to visitors with its Canterbury Journey project.

As part of this, a new welcome centre costing almost £2m will be built, leading into the Buttermarket square outside the cathedral and housing a new café where visitors can view the building and learn more about its history.

The cathedral is determined to make its heritage more accessible to all and will use £200,000 to improve access into, and around, the grounds.

Most of the funding will go towards conserving the building itself.

More than £9m will be spent on restoring the Christ Church Gate, nave and West Tower to their former glory.

The historic landmark has been slowly crumbling for the better part of a decade, largely through pollution and corrosion.

In 2006, this elicited warnings from cathedral trustees that there would be disastrous consequences if urgent action was not taken to conserve the building, but a lack of money hindered any direct work.

One caveat to the lottery funding is that it will only be made available if the cathedral is able to raise another £7.4m over the next two years; so far it has managed £2.6m.

The Very Reverend Dr Robert Willis, the Dean of Canterbury, said of the new lottery funding: "This initial support from the HLF is a public endorsement of the cathedral's plans for maintaining its wonderful architecture, as well as enabling even more people to be a creative part of the cathedral's community and enjoy all that it has to offer.

"We are hugely grateful to the trustees of the HLF for their very generous support.

"Now we have two years to crystallise our plans – and to raise the £7.4m of matched funding required.

"That will be an immense challenge, but it is one my colleagues and I accept with relish."

The HLF first opened for applications in 1994 and is a way of distributing money raised through the National Lottery.

The organisation gives money to worthy heritage causes and has in the past supported other Kent projects such as The White Cliffs Landscape Partnership and the Medway Gap 'Valley of Visions' Landscape Partnership.

Since it started, HLF has provided funding totalling more than £6 billion for some 36,000 individual projects.

However, Canterbury Cathedral was a particularly special case due to its importance to the UK's heritage, as Angela Dean, an HLF trustee, said.

"Canterbury Cathedral is an extraordinary part of our collective heritage – regardless of faith, its magnificent structure cannot fail to impress," she said.

"Proposals for the conservation of the site will ensure a resilience for the future but will also be a catalyst for much wider community involvement.

"This is just the beginning of a long but exciting journey for the cathedral and those who work there, and we will be supporting them as they continue to develop the project."

The announcement has been welcomed by many in the tourism sector, due to the site's popularity as a travel destination.

The cathedral welcomes more than a million visitors every year, bringing significant revenue to east Kent.

Bernard Donoghue, director of the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, said: "We are delighted with the news of this significant grant.

"Canterbury Cathedral is one of the most important, most visited and most loved attractions in the UK and this will provide a deeper and richer visitor experience for its visitors from around the world."

The Canterbury Journey project will still need to find funding over the next two years. Once the cathedral has raised the additional £7.4m it requires to unlock the HLF funds, the project will hopefully be started in 2016, with an intended completion date of 2021.

HEAVEN-SENT: Parts of the ancient cathedral have been decaying for years

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The greatest G&S show is finally taking to the road

Now we can all enjoy the work of Gilbert and Sullivan at its best, writes **David Mairs**

PERHAPS with a name like Sir William Schwenck Gilbert, there was always going to be an element of the absurd, but the legacy of WS Gilbert to the world of comic theatre has been monumental.

He was, of course, half of Gilbert and Sullivan, one of the greatest musical collaborations this country has ever produced. Their prominence, if not their star, has of course waned since their Victorian-era pomp, but many thousands across the world are still captivated by this most English of phenomena.

Gilbert was the librettist and Arthur Sullivan the composer behind 14 works that melded wonderful musical theatre with a glorious, sometimes riotous, romp of comical farce.

Happily, many more of us will this year have the opportunity to enjoy their work as the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company, the group that has made the festival such a success, takes to the road for the first time. There is just one venue selected in southern England: The Orchard Theatre in Dartford.

The decision to venture forth across the highways and byways coincides with the relocation of the Gilbert & Sullivan Festival from Buxton Opera House to Harrogate's 1,000-seat Royal Hall. Dramatic stuff, in every sense.

The festival, which this year celebrates its 21st anniversary, has been an undoubted success at Buxton, where up to 45,000 visitors would travel for the event every year, so why the change?

Bernard Lockett, a trustee of the festival who lives in Folkestone, said: "Buxton was selected as the base because it is so central. It's dead in the centre of England – but there was a need for a slightly larger theatre, hence the move to Harrogate, which is, of course, pretty central itself.

"Also, there is a greater range of accommodation in Harrogate."

Splendid, and surely worthy of a jaunt in itself, but in the meantime, and of more immediate relevance to lovers of music in Kent, what prompted the bold move by the company to go on tour, when its ambition thus far had not extended beyond three productions solely for the festival?

"There were many requests to go on tour for the first time ever," said Lockett. "We were of course aware of the quality of the company and the critical acclaim it received from audiences in Buxton. Now that can be spread across the country.

"It is the first time since 1982 that a company has toured three productions together. We will be taking The Mikado, Iolanthe and The Pirates Of Penzance – John Savournin is directing Pirates and Simon Butteriss the other two."

Lockett is perhaps the wrong man to ask, but how does he explain the enduring wonderment of G&S?

Continued on page 45 »

NO HIDING PLACE: The Pirates Of Penzance, top, and Iolanthe, this picture, are coming to Dartford

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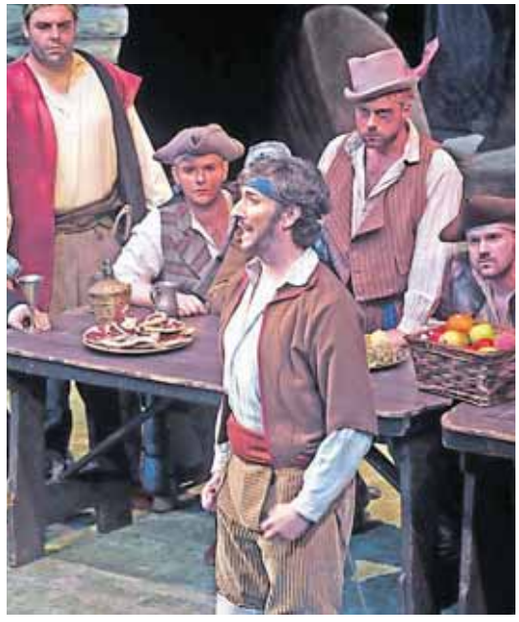
« Continued from page 43

"It's interesting," he said. "I have a theory that Gilbert and Sullivan were the forerunners to today's musical theatre, things like Les Mis and Phantom Of The Opera.

"The wonderful thing about their work is the satire and social comment. Iolanthe tackles the House of Commons in a manner that is still relevant today – I think that aspect of what they did has added to their popularity, not just in this country but in places like Australia and South Africa as well.

"The Mikado, for example, was never a story about Japan but about the failings of the British government – it was just disguised very well."

> **"I think they were the greatest pairing of a writer and a composer in the history of musical theatre"**



WE'RE THE VOICE: The Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company is embracing a new festival venue and the prospect of touring the country for the first time

The appeal is indeed universal.

"Sydney Opera House has a Gilbert and Sullivan festival every year, while there are performances way out of the orbit in places like Estonia, Hungary and Lithuania."

The obvious question is how much is lost in translation.

"It is usually done in English, but the programmes have glossaries that tell the audience what it is all about, although about two years ago a company from Barcelona put on Ruddigore at Buxton and cut out a lot of the dialogue and songs – it was fascinating and worked very well."

The scale of the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company production, meanwhile, is such that the number of venues where it can be presented in all its glory will always be limited.

"I don't think that many places could take this sort of production," said Lockett. "It's quite a large thing, with a 28-strong orchestra and a chorus of a similar size."

With the company having honed its work so specifically to the surrounds of the Buxton Opera House, what can the audience at The Orchard – a markedly different venue – expect?

"It will be performed just as it would be in Buxton or Harrogate – we don't change anything about Gilbert's words or Sullivan's music," said Lockett.

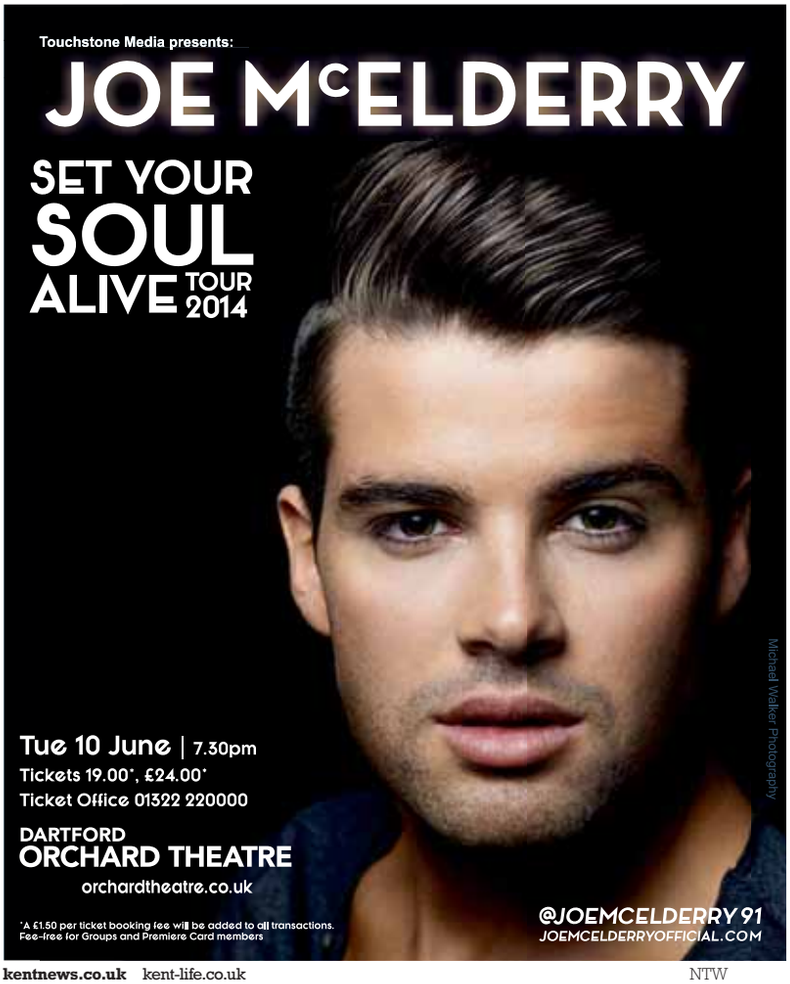
"In Pirates, for example, there are several points in the show where you could have enhanced choreography, but the stages weren't big when these pieces were written – indeed some were played by gaslight – and we have elected not to upgrade production in a manner that would be at odds with its original form."

It is no exaggeration to say that many people are in love with the work of Gilbert and Sullivan. Bernard Lockett is very clearly one of those people.

"Sullivan was an absolute master of tune," he said. "I think they were the greatest pairing of a writer and a composer in the history of musical theatre."

■ **The Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company will be at The Orchard Theatre, Dartford, from Wednesday to Saturday, June 18-21. On the Wednesday it will present The Mikado, on Thursday Iolanthe and on Friday and Saturday The Pirates Of Penzance.**

For times of performances and ticket details, phone 01322 220000 or visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.



Is Gove reading from the wrong page?

Maria Chiorando looks at the consequences of education secretary's change to GCSE English syllabus

LITERARY aficionados everywhere were dismayed this week at the news that education secretary Michael Gove was planning to change the English GCSE syllabus in a way that critics see as limiting and exclusive.

The changes, which Mr Gove has vigorously defended, appear to ensure that the GCSE syllabus will now be focused firmly on British-only texts at the cost of excluding American classics such as John Steinbeck's Of Mice And Men and Harper Lee's perennial favourite To Kill A Mockingbird.

GCSE study must now include the following: a Shakespeare play in its entirety, one piece of poetry from 1789, including the Romantics, and a 19th-century novel, as well as a work of fiction or drama originating from the British Isles since 1914.

Mr Gove hit back at his critics, saying that his plans expanded what students would study as they moved away from the usual books used in the classroom.

This is not a view shared by English teacher Charlotte Meyer Zu Natrup, who said: "He's not widening it because there's no international literature on the list as far as I can see, and most of the literature from England on there is pre-20th century, which is actually less accessible to the majority of young people.

"It's not possible to do anything in addition to the four things set out – when you get to that age, the GCSE syllabus is the syllabus.

"You don't have time to do more.

"What students do at GCSE is all they'll do because they don't have time to study beyond the breadth of the required texts."

The problem lies, then, not with what has been excluded from the syllabus but with the scale of what has been included.

> **"What GCSE students do is all they'll do because they don't have time to study beyond the breadth of the required texts"**

Most people would agree Romantic-era poetry and 19th-century novels are hefty undertakings, and Mr Gove himself has claimed this syllabus shows a higher level of ambition.

But at what cost?

"An important fact about the American texts that have been marginalised is they were accessible and they were shorter," said Mrs Meyer Zu Natrup.

"So, if you had a top set, you could do something like Great Expectations. If you're less interested in literature or less able, you can do Of Mice And Men.

"It's much shorter and the characters are more accessible to the children, who therefore stand some chance of getting hold of a bit of literary analysis."

The new outlines do not take into account different ability levels, claim some, saying it's going to be much harder to find a text that was written post-1914 that will be accessible to schoolchildren in the same way that Of Mice And Men has been.

Supporters of the proposals say the American texts are often used purely because they are shorter, a claim Mrs Meyer Zu Natrup is quick to counter.

"I wouldn't say that Mice and Men is only used because it's short, but it is a reason," she said.

"If I had a less able set, I may choose it, depending how much time I had.

"The characters are interesting, the power play between them. You don't pick a text because it's short."

More fundamental to many is the fact that in excluding international literature, children are losing out.

This is because by studying literature from different cultures you are enriching life experience, they say. That does not happen with a syllabus that, to all intents and purposes, limits you to the UK.

It is a dispute unlikely to be resolved soon.

"There are, in reality, four exam boards that can offer GCSE English literature and there are no rules requiring them to exclude or marginalise any writer," Mr Gove said.

"If they wish to include Steinbeck – whether it's Of Mice And Men or The Grapes Of Wrath – no one would be more delighted than me, because I want children to read more widely and range more freely intellectually."

MAN IN THE MIDDLE: Michael Gove's plans have been widely criticised

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BABY BOOMERS: Port Lympne Wild Animal Park staff saw several new arrivals this month, including a newborn drill, left, bison and fishing cat kittens

Animal park welcomes the pitter-patter of tiny hooves, paws, claws... and feet

KEEPERS at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park have been thrilled with a baby boom this month, including newborn bison and antelopes, fishing cat kittens, fossa pups and a baby drill.

Adrian Harland, animal director, said: "We are all delighted with our spring baby boom and most of the youngsters are now starting to venture out and explore their new surroundings."

In the hoofstock section, keepers are particularly pleased with the arrival of a baby female bison as the newborn boosts the numbers of the herd.

The park recently made headlines when it sent a female bison into the wild as part of a reintroduction programme placing bison in Romania's Carpathian Mountains.

Bob Savill, head of the hoofstock section, said: "It was amazing to be part of a joint programme designed to reintroduce European bison to the Carpathian Mountains, and the arrival of this female youngster means we will be able to continue with this project in the future."

Although some of the newborns are easy to spot, others such as the fossa pups are still in their nest box, prompting keepers to practise their skills in technology and provide a live feed from the den to a wide-screen TV, meaning that for the first time visitors can see what the pups are getting up to in real time.

Neville Buck, head of the small cat section, said: "We've got three baby fossa in the den with mum and they're all doing well.

"We wanted to be able to give our visitors unprecedented access and experience live footage of these lovely youngsters with their mum."

Meanwhile, in the primate section a baby drill baboon has been spotted with first-time mum Yola.

At just a few days old, baby is reported to be doing well, as is mum.

Simon Jeffery, animal manager and head of the primate section, said: "We're all delighted with our baby drill's progress. Mum is doing a fantastic job considering this is her first youngster."

The park opens at 9.30am and closes at 6.30pm. For further information, including entry prices and online tickets, visit www.aspinallfoundation.org/portlympne.

Positive note is key to family music festival in Medway

DETAILS of this year's Love Music Hate Racism festival in Medway have been confirmed.

The free family event, now in its eighth year, will take place on Saturday and Sunday, June 7-8, at its new home of Fort Amherst, Chatham.

Saturday will have performances on four stages, while the Sunday will see sound systems from the Notting Hill carnival entertain crowds.

The full line-up for all stages will be announced later in the year.

Previous years' acts have included The Voice finalist Jamie Johnson and X Factor stars Rough Copy and Andy Abraham.

Vince Maple, a member of the organising committee, said: "It is eight years since we announced the first Medway LMHR.

"During that time we have seen amazing musical acts, poets, dancers and speakers all giving their time to show they support the important message of unity in the community as well as thousands of people who have come to enjoy this family-friendly event.

"Medway LMHR sends a positive message to say the vast majority of people enjoy and embrace our great diverse community."

For more details, visit www.lovemusichateracism-medway.co.uk.

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A sparkling success story that is continuing to grow

Our glorious county is at the vanguard of a home-grown movement taking on the world's finest sparkling wines. **Sam Wylie-Harris** toasts its good health.

HOME-GROWN English bubbly is increasingly giving Champagne a run for its money, a trend highlighted by the recent clutch of medals awarded to our sparkling-wine producers by the International Wine Challenge (IWC), the Oscars of the wine world.

Kent, you won't be surprised to learn, is at the vanguard of this movement, but the growing success story stretches across much of southern England.

With quality and consistency continually improving, our bubbly is now on a par with the likes of Champagne houses Pommery, Henriot and Charles Heidsieck, which were all awarded gold medals alongside Kent's own Gusbourne Estate Brut Reserve 2009, Nyetimber Classic Cuvee 2009, from West Sussex, and Camel Valley Chardonnay Brut, 2009, from Cornwall.

These are just three of the record-breaking 52 sparkling medal-winners helping to increase farmers' fortunes in the south of England.

So, English wine is on the up. Latest harvest figures for 2013 reveal a bumper crop and the highest production on record with a forecast of 4.5 million bottles.

Two-thirds of this will be sparkling wine, predominantly from Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Neunier – the three classic Champagne varieties, accounting for 45 per cent of recent plantings and that make up the celebrated blend in the Nyetimber Classic Cuvee 2009 .

Elsewhere in the world, almost every wine region produces a fizz or two.

But with a similar climate to Europe and a chalky soil that stretches from the white cliffs of Dover through the North Downs of Kent to the South Downs of Sussex and Hampshire (that is not that different from the famous French terroir), our producers are standing up to quality Champagne and stirring an interest in English wine.

A former winemaker at Nyetimber, Dermot Sugrue has launched his second vintage of Sugrue Pierre The Trouble With Dreams 2010, Sussex (£35, www.eebria.com), made from a small vineyard he planted on chalk in 2006.

A blend of 55 per cent Chardonnay, 40 per cent Pinot Noir and 5 per cent Meunier, it has received rave reviews and you would be hard-pushed not to think it was Champagne from the rich toast and yeasty bouquet that gives way to a complex flavour camp of bold, lemony, biscuity fruit, delicate lime and a long, elegant finish.

GOLDEN GREAT: Gusbourne Estate Brut Reserve 2009

NTW

One of five gold-medal-winners, Gusbourne is another boutique winery, with vineyards in Kent and West Sussex that were first planted in 2004 and its current release, Gusbourne Estate Brut Reserve 2009, Kent (£28, Oddbins), marks its second consecutive gold.

Predominantly made from Chardonnay with a top-up of Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier for strength and body, it has an attractive floral nose, a crisp, fresh palate, with notes of baked apples and pears, good acidity and a delightfully refreshing mouth feel.

English wine's original powerhouse and the UK's first commercial vineyard, Hambledon in Hampshire, has released Hambledon Classic Cuvee NV (£28.50, Fields, Morris & Verdin, 020 7819 0360) after a multi-million-pound regeneration of the estate amid hopes of recreating its success from the 1950s.

A blend of 70 per cent Chardonnay, 20 per cent Pinot Meunier and 10 per cent Pinot Noir from the 2010 and 2011 vintages, it's classy, crisp and pure, with citrus and apple flavours and a fresh, vibrant finish.

Bluebell Vineyard Estates Hindleap Brut Classic Cuvee 2009, East Sussex (£19.99, Waitrose), has won multiple awards, including an IWC Bronze medal – the marriage of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay helps produce flowery apple aromas with bready notes, crisp apple fruit and ending with bright acidity.

Meanwhile, Barbara Laithwaite (co-founder of Laithwaites) has released her second vintage, Wyfold Vineyard Sparking Wine 2010, Oxfordshire (£29.99, www.laithwaites.co.uk), and this Chardonnay-based blend has a trademark mineral freshness, with complex, toasty notes mingling with orchard fruits, that helped it take fourth place at the Judgement of Parsons Green blind tasting earlier this year.

Another label to watch out for, Ridgeview was founded almost 20 years ago and its Ridgeview Marksman Blanc de Blancs Brut 2010, Sussex (£26, Marks & Spencer) is made exclusively for M&S.

A silver-medal-winner made from 100 per cent Chardonnay, it is expressive with a floral, toasty nose, creamy apple and spice flavours, a hint of brioche and straight-down-the-line deliciousness.

» For more food and drink articles pick up a copy of this month's KENT LIFE

Sometimes it's best to follow the brightest stars to find a new star

Flavours By Kumar

Location: Ramsgate

By **David Mairs**

THERE are people who like to claim that they hang out where the rich and famous go. Rock stars, actors, footballers... you name them, the chances are that our name-dropping acquaintances will have seen them very recently. I am not one of those people, but...

But it is a strange truth that where I go to dine, increasingly some of this country's finest actors dine, too.

Not so very long ago, I was eating at Cinnamon Spice in Margate just along from Stephen Graham, Hannah Walters and friends. Then, having treated myself to the delights of Flavours By Kumar in nearby Ramsgate, I discovered that Timothy Spall and his brother had subsequently swung by there as well.

So I missed him on this occasion, but I'm not sure it really matters. What's important is that I share the same tastes as the stars.

Really. Because Timothy, as I would have called him were our culinary paths to have crossed that evening, ate Chicken 65 as his starter, followed by chicken tikka and lamb kebab (his brother had king prawn curry).

I, too, had Chicken 65 to start. It was one of the most enjoyable starters I have had in an Indian restaurant.

Comprising chicken pieces fried in yoghurt, onion and spices (although, suffice to say, there's a whole lot more to it than that), the taste had to be experienced to be believed. This is is a starter that should be expanded into a main-dish option.

So Timothy and I share a taste in starters, but we parted the ways from that point.

I had seafood curry with cumin rice as my main course, and the generous collection of fish, prawns and squid was set off to a tee by the smartly-spiced curry.

I wrapped things up with coconut ice-cream served in a coconut shell.

ALL WHITES: Proprietor Anil Kumar with actor Timothy Spall, fresh back in the UK having picked up the best-actor gong at the Cannes Film Festival for his role in the movie Mr Turner

Not always one for desserts, I was on this occasion a gleeful convert.

One of my companions also had seafood curry, while the other, still easing her way in to the Indian experience, tucked in heartily to the milder chicken shahi korma. Both were as delighted as I had been with the whole experience.

So now you know what the stars eat, you know what I eat, and I suggest you make up your own minds at this excellent restaurant. Flavours By Kumar will, I hope, be with us for a long time to come.

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

Grow up and face the airport truth

MORE sensationalist claptrap about Manston Airport, this time from NC Weeks (KoS letters 24.05.14).

Thanet will become a desert if the airport closes?

Grow up, for goodness' sake!

The airport has never provided a fraction of the job numbers we have been promised and it is obvious to anyone with even the most simplistic understanding of economics that it is not a viable proposition.

Its closure will have little, if any, effect on Thanet and the wider east Kent economy.

It's just a shame so few of our local politicians had the honesty to say so.

Mick Davies, Broadstairs

Manston could have been saviour

I HAVE been bemused for many years that an airport in the Thames estuary was being considered when there was already Manston Airport with a long runway and good rail and road links almost there.

To me it is sad and somewhat mystifying that Manston has been consistently overlooked and is now closed.

Jeaneatte Carlton, Bearsted

I would send Ann Gloag to the Tower

WHAT do I think of Manston Airport's closure? I think that owner Ann Gloag should be sent to the Tower of London for treason.

The airport should remain a place where aircraft in trouble can land – it has one of the longest runways in the country.

It could also be used as a freight hub, as has been done successfully in the past.

Take the freight from Gatwick, take the freight from Heathrow.

Taking freight from others, you free up space for people so there's no need for any more airports.

Mrs Gloag got the airport for a pound. She should get £2 back. She is not flying the flag for us – she just has pound signs in her eyes, I believe.

DE Rose, Ramsgate

It's time to make our voice heard

AS a co-founder of the Alliance of Kent Commuters, I have learned a lot about travelling – whether by rail, car, aeroplane or even ship.

And one thing they have in common when it comes to the people of Kent is we are always ignored by the decision-makers in government.

For example, Kent's MPs banded together to lobby the Government to put forward their arguments about HS1 and how this can be better implemented following the shambolic treatment of the hard-working rail traveller who has been hit with above-inflation increases to fund this white elephant while suffering longer and less reliable rail services across the rail network.

The result – they were ignored.

The decision to not back Manston airport is yet another example of the decision-makers ignoring the people of Kent and their transport needs.

There is a very simple solution, in my opinion, to bring employment, inward investment and utilise the long runway – and that is to build rail links to the airport.

I am sure this would be cheaper and less controversial than pandering to yet another political ego by building an island airport in the Thames estuary.

In east Kent, we are constantly ignored by the governments, regardless of political persuasion, while the efforts of our MPs fall on deaf ears even when that government is formed from the same party.

We in The Alliance of Kent Commuters urge people to voice their opinions about this simple proposal by writing to their MP and sending a letter or email to PM David Cameron.

We did this before and we were heard by those in power.

Now is the time to do so again and we hope the people of Kent stand up to make their voices heard. Enough is enough and we deserve better.

Manston Airport was at the forefront of the Battle of Britain and the population of Kent should be rightly proud of this heritage.

We once again need to stand together to fight against an apathy so incumbent on our country's leaders.

John Nicholson, Alliance of Kent Commuters

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Putting England first must be PM's priority

LOOKING at the list of candidates before the European elections, I was delighted to find the English Democrats alive and well.

Why is it that Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland have their own parliaments yet we in England are still at the mercy of MPs they elect to Westminster?

Why can't a couple of days a week be given over to purely English matters?

Seventy per cent or more of our legislation comes from Europe, but why should those in the UK who have their own parliaments interfere with English legislation for England?

Ukip is a one-man band. Ukip says what it thinks, not what people want to hear, but it ignores the unfairness of the Celtic fringe dictating to the English – as it did with student fees.

Let England be governed by English MPs and then let David Cameron sort out England's relationship with Europe in England's best interests.

Ivan Armstrong, Vigo

Hurtful comments too much to bear

I WOULD like to thank publicly the many people who have approached me, phoned me and sent me messages of thanks and good wishes from across Kent, following my decision to step down as leader at Thanet District Council.

Holding a 'hung council' together with a minority administration is an incredibly difficult thing to do and I'm proud to say my administration managed to do it for two-and-a-half years.

Despite the hardest financial squeeze from central government Thanet has ever known, and our council being seriously affected by the appalling Transeuropa ferry collapse, somehow our fantastic financial team at TDC managed to keep business as usual and with not one increase in our council tax.

I also had the added problem of leading a council at a time when a former leader and sitting councillor went through court and into prison, seriously damaging the organisation and its reputation.

The staff at TDC who deliver day-to-day services and so much extra are fantastic and I was very pleased when the recent Local Government Association Peer Review process confirmed just that.

To do these things while under scrutiny is a good thing and I have always welcomed robust debate.

Unfortunately, a standards system altered by the Government to the point where it has no teeth simply plays to those with sensationalistic and anarchistic intent.

Social media, which is used positively by so many, can also play into the hands of those who simply want to cause disruption and chaos.

Two-and-a-half years is a long time to tolerate a relentless barrage of malicious and false accusations, particularly from one hypocritical individual who felt he had the right to question my integrity.

Such despicable actions began to affect my family and, consequently, my own health and well-being.

I'm a generally positive individual and life has taught me to distance myself wherever possible from those with negative tendencies.

To quote George Bernard Shaw: "Never wrestle with a pig. You get dirty, and besides, the pig likes it."

I love the Isle of Thanet, the place of idyllic natural beauty where I was born and bred and the place where our grandchildren are now enjoying their own wonderful youth.

Cllr Clive Hart (Labour), Cliftonville

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: "We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise." This is summed up in the strapline 'Inspiring Communities'.

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4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
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by **Alan Blackburn from Canterbury**

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Hospital signs contract to get £45 million makeover

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A CONTRACTOR is set to begin the redevelopment of one of Kent's leading private hospitals.

Willmott Dixon's role as one of the largest constructors of health and well-being accommodation was underlined when it was confirmed as main contractor on the £45 million redevelopment of Benenden Hospital, near Cranbrook.

The project, once it gets under way, is expected to be completed by the end of 2016 – an indication of the intensive work that is planned.

Benenden Hospital is a flagship independent hospital providing care to thousands of people each year.

Willmott Dixon says that it intends to transform the hospital with new and pdated facilities, so meeting ever-changing health-care needs.

One of the major upgrades is the accommodation layout – the redevelopment will see all patients staying at the hospital offered the comfort of single bedrooms.

John Waterman, managing director for Willmott Dixon in the Southern Homes Counties, said: "We are delighted to have secured this contract.

"We have a strong presence in Kent and our team is looking forward to creating a facility that will have a profound impact on supporting health and well-being in the region.

"We recently won a Queen's Award for Enterprise for our work in sustainable development and much of that was recognition of the positive impact we bring to communities – we're looking forward to adding to that record here."

A VISION OF HEALTH: Willmott Dixon will redevelop Benenden Hospital

Benenden Hospital director Jane Abbott said: "This is fantastic news. This is a milestone in the hospital's 107-year history."

Benenden is an independent trust hospital with charitable status.

Patients used to be exclusively Benenden health members, who still form the majority of cases, but the site now welcomes those who wish to fund their own treatment, either directly or through insurance, as well as those arriving as NHS patients through the NHS Choose and Book scheme.

HMRC out Kent tax defaulters

THE taxman continues to publically name and shame tax defaulters – and the latest list includes three concerns from Kent.

A promotional clothing company in West Wickham has received nine penalties totalling more than £16,000 between April 2010 and June 2012 on taxes of some £30,000. Meanwhile, the head of a school of pharmacy in Medway has received penalties of more than £12,000 on taxes of just over £30,000 and a pub landlord in Erith had a single penalty of just under £26,000 on £55,000 of taxes.

HMRC's Jennie Granger said: "Publishing taxpayers' names is not something we do lightly – but this is an important part of HMRC's approach to combating tax evasion and non-compliance.

"We urge people to come forward so we can help them get back on track.

"It is always easier if people make a full and prompt disclosure."

Details of deliberate defaulters can be found at www.hmrc.gov.uk/defaulters.

Bank happy to back expansion plans for a trusted customer

A SMALL Rochester company's plans to expand its workforce by a third have been made possible thanks to its excellent relationship with its bank.

The manufacturer supplies machinery for the food production industry and was beginning to run out of space.

But now, thanks to funding support from NatWest, The Food Machinery Company Ltd (TFMCL) is completing a £394,350 expansion.

The work will include extending its commercial premises in St Mary Hoo, near Rochester; providing new office space for members of staff; building a new demonstration area so prospective clients can see how its machines operate; and a new, enhanced storage and renovated workshop area.

TFMCL said it is also hoped to increase its workforce from 15 to 25 people over the next five years.

The company has more than 35 years' experience in supplying machinery for the industrial food-processing and packaging industry throughout Ireland and the UK.

When the time came to embark on the extension project, Mike Wilkinson, managing director of TFMCL, turned to NatWest relationship manager Mark Lempriere.

Having banked with NatWest for more than 20 years, allowing the bank to develop a strong understanding of the business, Mr Wilkinson was able to secure a £147,175 loan for the expansion project.

He said: "Mark has been excellent. We have found Mark and his team very supportive."

Mr Lempriere added: "I am very pleased to have been able to provide the financial support TFMCL needed to expand. These are exciting times for the company and I wish them every success for the future."

Building is expected to begin in the months ahead, with the new premises up and running this winter.

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PETITE slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoy nights in/out and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412327**

WIDOW 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475**

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. **Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box 366019**

KATIE 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412319**

JANE 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days, WLTM not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412315**

CHRISTINA, curvy beauty, 27yrs, own home, very very adventurous seeks no strings fun and frolics. Can accommodate and will answer all calls. **Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box 410127**

MARY 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WLTM likeminded caring, happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412169**

CLARE 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412053**

SAM, 35yrs, own business, sexy, loves dressing up and married, seeks discreet man for casual meetings. Can travel anywhere. ACA. **Tel No: 0905 002 1949 Box 408297**

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779**

JEWISH widow, 67, loves animals, seeks genuine, Jewish gent, 68-73 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410547**

SHARON 32yrs and still soul searching for Mr Right, I enjoy keeping in shape, caring for people, seeking loving respectful guy who also knows a good time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412049**

SLIM petite, attractive brunette, 56, British/Russian origin, excellent cook/home maker, seeks cultured male for serious relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412129**

FREYA 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laidback guy/dad for dates, chats and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412045**

MARILYN really nice curvy tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411871**

SUSIE, married, adventurous/dominant lady, 38yrs, seeks discreet man any age/area for no strings fun. **Tel: 0905 002 1945 Box 412285**

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JAN 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411865**

SARAH 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WLTM similar fun genuine guy. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411537**

JULIE attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WLTM someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411513**

BLONDE pretty, long legged, voluptuous, blue eyes, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410585**

LINDA 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411033**

CAROLINE 39yr old pretty blonde looking for handsome caring man to put the sparkle back into my life and make each other feel special. Call me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411891**

33YR old sick of being single working mum, OHAC, likes the simple things in life, looking for romantic, honest guy with GSOH for cosy nights in and fun nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411887**

CINDY 31 attractive, size 12 brown eyed blonde, new to this but sick of passing up potential soul mate so thought I wld give it a go. ACA **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411873**

RITA divorced care worker with no ties, 5ft 1ins, dark hair, enjoys meals out, cosy nights in, seeking male 45-55 with GSOH and similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411775**

JANET 5ft 8ins, slim 12, pretty, green eyes, brown hair, seeking male companion for friendship hopefully leading to a relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411689**

MELANIE tall curvy attractive bubbly female who loves meals out, cosy nights in with a nice wine, walking, seeks professional male with outgoing GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411509**

LYN 34yrs, pretty petite dark haired female, loves music, meals out, quiet drinks out, seeking caring male with GSOH who can make me feel special again. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410137**

CAROLINE blonde curvy very active lady who loves to socialise, countryside, seeking similar caring male for LTR and to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409413**

RACHEL 39, brown hair/eyes, 5ft 6ins, bubbly, outgoing, naughty, busty, divorced, seeks male for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410835**

SUE optimistic divorced lady with OHAC, good job, enjoys meals out, cinema, countryside, pub lunches, looking for likeminded outgoing happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410467**

CATHY very much a lady seeks gent up to 62yrs who would appreciate an independent professional sassy female who loves to be wined, dined and romanced. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410301**

WOULD you like to bounce into spring with me and onwards? Widow late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395**

SATURDAY night blues! Home alone again and looking for male companionship. Blonde, slim, 32yrs, attractive, what are you waiting for? Call me if you're normal and lovely. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408867**

LADY 60, size 12, easy going, likes animals, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411301**

MARIE 37yrs slim attractive caring, likes meals in/out, cinema, tennis, keeping fit/ active, WLTM fun, loving, reliable man for friendship leading to more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411037**

SOPHIE 27yr old nursing assistant with no ties looking for discreet adult fun times with tall attractive guy 35-42yrs. GSOH essential. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410717**

34YR single mum of 1 who loves nights out having a good time seeks similar sociable fun guy to enjoy relaxed but extremely fun relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410709**

BUSTY Caribbean lady who loves music, dance and singing, looking for nice older guy for mutual adult no strings fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410305**

MARIE slim attractive fun brunette, looking for good times with exciting broadminded male. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409707**

RACHAEL 36yr old nurse looking to raise the temperature of reliable sincere male. I have my OACH, a single mum to 1, love gym, cosy meals, animals etc. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411045**

SUSAN 29 green eyes, dark hair, slim, looking for Mr tall dark and handsome to take me out, enjoy adult times without complications just fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410957**

KAREN blonde blue eyed slim 35yr old interesting female looking for good times, call me if are in a similar situation, board and looking for some fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410719**

JANE pretty size 12, loves going out socialising, countryside, meals out, looking for no strings fun, nothing heavy, give me a call if you are seeking similar. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410579**

SUE 32 blonde blue eyed curvy nurse, caring, loving romantic, faithful, likes cosy nights in with a nice wine and lovely man, if that's you, call me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410571**

Men Seeking

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MALE 60yr single tall, slim, not working, smoker, enjoys a drink, seeks nice lady 50-60. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4397689**

JAMES young, free and single, please give me a call if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412345**

EX headmaster, tall, dark, seeks adventurous lady, status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412263**

MALE 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235**

BESIDE the Pointe. Literate self-possessing, legginess, kindred spirit sought by white male for elevating the bar. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412223**

MALE 49, attractive, fit, spontaneous, good company, no ties, seeking likeminded lady for the road ahead, nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411309**

CHIPS on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. NE Kent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725**

MALE 71, 5ft 10ins, medium build, N/S, likes gardening, dogs, seeks female, 65-71 for friendship/companionship and outings. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411587**

MALE 5ft 11ins, good-looking, athletic build, looking for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477**

DEREK seeking female, 50-60 for company, friendship and have fun together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411433**

RAY 63, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired, seeking no strings discreet meets for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411147**

WORLD war veteran seeking happy lady with nice conversation in the Kent area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411133**

PAUL own business, looking for daytime fun with lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411127**

DAVE 65, retired, N/S, likes gardening, music, meals out, holidays, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410971**

DAVE 62, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired builder, seeks no strings discreet daytime meets for adult fun. Surrey. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410899**

MALE likes outdoor life, smoker, seeking local female for cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410755**

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

DEREK 5ft 11ins, slim-medium build, loving, caring, seeking black lady for possible relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410511**

EARLY 50's single male, smoker, seeking likeminded female for company and to share life. Must have GSOH, like animals, walks, home made food and nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410441**

41YR old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411**

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377**

PHIL 6ft, clean shaven, blue eyes, smart, likes sports, walks, films, theatre, music, animals, GSOH, seeks female, 40-55 for fun and friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410351**

RETIRED male, fit, active, seeks no strings discreet meet with female, any age and size. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410343**

ADVENTUROUS male, mid 50's, seeks similar lady for fun and mutually enjoyable discreet relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410339**

CHRIS widower likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191**

ATTRACTIVE white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025**

DIVORCED male, seeks Oriental lady, likes animals, music, will take care of you forever. Thanet area, willing to travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409963**

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PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409961**

CANTERBURY mature male, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim-medium build female, 24-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

ADAM 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421**

PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745**

TALL black male, 45, likes meals out, good company, romantic, GSOH, light hearted, seeks easy-going female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409621**

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RETIRED male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Dover. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409533**

MALE seeking attractive female for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409189**

MALE seeking female to love and be loved back. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408941**

FIT fellow, full of fun, 58, seeks to find fanciable lady for free and fascinating future for LTR. Find your jar half full. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405857**

CHRIS 52, slim, looking for female, 25-38, slim, 5ft 2ins plus for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408575**

DAVE 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541**

DAVE 50, seeks female of similar age for meals out, holidays etc. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408415**

BLACK male, looking for 1-2-1 relationship with laid back, understanding female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406221**

RETIRED male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Medway area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408343**

RETIRED male, 66, 6ft 2ins, easy going, GSOH, loyal, loves pets, meals out, life, seeks lady for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407317**

MALE 67, professional, fit, 5ft 10ins, medium build, reliable, tactile, likes most things, seeks slim lady, let's go! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407855**

STEVE 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homely, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835**

ANTHONY 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355**

71YR old romantic, 6ft, likes life, socialising, reading, strong tea, dogs, smoker but house trained seeks mature lady needing TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407277**

TALL friendly, very light hearted, single 58, seeks pretty woman for LTR, mutual selection of activities and choosing how to spend our time. Croydon. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407147**

YOUNG 70 widower, fit, lonely, 5ft 11ins, 11st, likes drives, walks, DIY, meals out, gardening, smoker, looking for lady to spend life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405519**

DAVE genuine guy, 6ft, black hair, blue eyes, medium build, likes sports, gardening, music, seeks female with GSOH and genuine. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388372**

RETIRED male 68, 5ft 8ins, considerate, GSOH, easygoing, likes driving, shopping, most music, seeking lady 60-70 for friendship. Ashford. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404589**

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open-top Motoring

Convertible passion defies UK logic

IT IS a peculiarly British thing to aspire to open-top motoring, when we are supposed to have Europe's most unreliable weather.

But maybe getting the roof down is more important to Brits because the chance comes so rarely.

Then there's the heritage factor: UK manufacturers were early leaders in open-top motoring, with classics including the Triumph TRs, glorious Jaguar XKs and the E-Type and, of course, MGs.

Indeed, after the First World War, markets worldwide bought into our affordable open-top phenomenon as MG and Co were driven to export and pull Britain out of post-war depression. But it was still a niche market and, as the UK car industry declined, companies were less keen to research and develop replacements.

Classics were allowed to become outmoded, and the few imported convertibles tended to be flaky or exorbitant luxuries.

Then Mazda created the MX-5 in the late 1980s, inspired by Triumphs and MGs, but offering a balance and reliability they could not emulate. It even had a weathertight roof that could be raised or lowered in seconds.

As more convertibles entered the market, so the quality improved.

And then Mercedes-Benz made headlines by launching the folding hard-top two-seat SLK roadster in 1996.

Others rushed to copy the idea as many buyers realised that their dream convertible could also be a car for all seasons – one you could even claim as your company car.

RENAULT DARES TO BE DIFFERENT

RENAULT took the folding hard-top coupé cabriolet format one stage further by launching one with a glass roof.

And you can't help but admire the thinking behind it: why not have the feel of open-top motoring even with the roof up?

The first take on this was the Megane Coupé-Cabriolet or CC of 2006, replaced by a smarter, more premium version in 2009 spun from the new-look Megane hatchback range.

The glass roof is an engineering tour de force created in partnership with German motor specialist Karmann, which created the original VW Beetle Convertible – now very collectible.

The latest-generation Megane CC can also carry two adults in the back, making this car a serious contender for everyday motoring and long-distance mileages.

On top of that, Renault offers a typically crowd-pleasing list of alternative powertrains, including some from the French marque's impressive range of diesels.

Cabin quality is a major advance on the previous car, too, and it comes with lots of standard equipment to challenge premium contenders – none of which can match that clever glass roof.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Cascada Elite 1.4i 16v VVT Turbo (140PS) Start/Stop: Urban: 35.8 (7.9), Extra-urban: 51.4 (5.5), Combined: 44.8 (6.3). CO_2 emissions: 149g/km.

Model shown Cascada Elite 1.4i 16v VVT Turbo (140PS) Start/Stop £26,680 with 20" Alloy Wheels £1,000, Two-coat Pearlescent Paint £525, Front Parking Distance Sensors £385, Premium Forward Lighting Pack £790, Premium Leather Pack £2,495. Total OTR cost £31,875. Prices and specifications correct at time of going to print. Vauxhall Lifetime Warranty covers lifetime ownership of first registered keeper, 100,000 mile limit. Terms and conditions apply. Visit www.vauxhall.co.uk/warranty. Official Government Test Environmental Data. Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

Britain the first to sample joys of Italian open-top

FIAT recognised that we Brits know most about la dolce vita with convertibles, so it chose us to be first to get the open-top version of its popular 500 supermini.

As the current 500 is itself a retro homage to the 1950s 500 'Nuevo' model, so the convertible 500C naturally resembles the 1957 fabric-roof Nuevo derivative.

But the resemblance ends there; it's more than 50 years ahead for refinement and convenience, with research ensuring that turbulence with the roof open has been cut to a minimum.

The fast opening/retracting electric sliding roof also makes the 500C a year-round proposition.

It has an exclusive feel to its interior, too, embellished with desirable fabrics or leathers, and highly customisable.

There are several powertrain options, including a 1.3-litre diesel for the ultimate economy driving, though the smart choice is the low-emission turbocharged 0.9-litre TwinAir petrol unit, blending economy and performance and light enough to take advantage of the 500C's nimble character.

Cascada signals high aims

VAUXHALL is aiming upmarket and the Cascada makes the point very well.

It's a stylish full four-seat convertible built on the Vauxhall Astra platform, so it handles and rides well, but its own sleek and elegant body makes it 20cm longer.

And while the powered fabric roof looks traditional against folding hard-top rivals, it's the best sound-insulating 'ragtop' by far for the money and enables the Cascada to look elegant with roof up or down.

Bootspace is not horribly compromised, either, when the roof is retracted and stowed automatically beneath a neat rear deck.

And there's decent accommodation for both rear passengers, with good legroom for this type of car, and rear seats that are not absurdly upright as in some other four-seat convertibles.

On the road, you are quickly aware, too, that this is a convertible designed from the ground up: the Cascada feels taut, with in-built strength engineered in rather than simply bolted on afterwards.

French marque boasts a folding hard-top heritage

PEUGEOT actually invented the folding hard-top convertible in 1938 and was also one of the first to reintroduce it, with its little 206CC of 2000.

The French marque's coupé convertible flag is now flown, though, by the grander 308CC, seen above, with a signature windscreen that is wickedly raked to create the smallest possible powered folding roof for the boot to accommodate.

It adds elegance to the four-seat French star, which also comes with a fine range of engines – including typically smooth and responsive diesels.

Perhaps the most eye-catching feature of the car is the luxurious interior, with which Peugeot posted a challenge to supposedly premium rivals.

It is a convincing argument that the 308CC is a smart way to go touring and – thanks to its secure hard-top – a credible all-year-round car.

If it's more than you need in a convertible, though, Peugeot also offers the smaller 207CC, which also has a fully-electric folding roof.

NORTHGATE FIAT, 1 WESTMINSTER ROAD, VAUXHALL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, CANTERBURY, KENT, CT1 1YY. TEL: 01227 828200 WWW.NORTHGATE-FIAT.CO.UK

Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500 range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 49.6 (5.7) – 64.2 (4.4); Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) – 91.1 (3.1); Combined 58.9 (6.5) – 76.3 (3.7). CO_2 emissions 113 – 90 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Terms & Conditions apply. Retail customers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offer. With Fiat i-Deal you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (A charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 6,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Offer subject to status. A guarantee or indemnity may be required. Fiat Financial Services, PO Box 4465, Slough SL1 0RW. We work with a number of creditors to provide finance to our customers, including Fiat Financial Services. April to June 2014 offer. Fiat Deposit Contribution available on Fiat 500 models, and is only available in conjunction with Fiat i-Deal Low Cost. Prices correct at time of printing. Offer may be varied and withdrawn at any time. Subject to availability.

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Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500 range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 49.6 (5.7) – 64.2 (4.4); Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) – 91.1 (3.1); Combined 58.9 (4.8) – 76.3 (3.7). CO_2 emissions 113 – 90 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. *Under current DVLA regulations there is no charge for Vehicle Excise Duty in the first year of registration and every subsequent year. Vehicle Excise Duty rates are reviewed annually by the government and are subject to change.

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RENAULT

The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the car shown are: Urban 35.8 (7.9) Extra Urban 51.3 (5.5); Combined 44.1 (6.4). The official CO_2 emissions are 145 g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO_2 may vary with driving styles, road conditions and other factors.

4+ Terms and exclusions apply. 4+ package available to non-business customers on new Renault vehicles. Warranty 4 years/100,000 miles and routine servicing 4 years/48,000 miles (whichever comes first). Servicing package available to Renault Selections customers only; alternatively can be purchased for just £299 (price shown valid when purchased by 31 July 2014). Visit renault.co.uk/4plus for full details. Finance provided by RCI Financial Services Limited, PO Box 149, Watford WD17 1FJ. Subject to status. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. You must be at least 18 and a UK resident (excluding the Isle of Man and Channel Islands). Terms and conditions apply.

*4 years' 0% APR representative offer is available on new Mégane ranges with a minimum 30% deposit, which includes £1250 deposit contribution (excluding Mégane Expression+ and Renaultsport). Offers cannot be used with other schemes or finance offers and are available on featured new vehicles when ordered between 1 and 31 May 2014 and registered by 30 June 2014. Car shown has optional metallic paint, available at an additional £525.

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Public Sector

TO ADVERTISE:
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BRADSTOW SCHOOL

Bradstow is a creative and unique residential school for children between the ages of 5 & 19. It is situated in 13 acres of parkland just a few hundred metres from the sandy beaches of Broadstairs. We seek to meet the needs of children and young people with autism and severe learning difficulties with associated behaviours that may be challenging. We have achieved national recognition for our developments in Communication and Behaviour Management.

DUE TO EXPANDING OUR PROVISION WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING VACANCIES:

HOUSEPARENTS – EXTENDED PROVISION

Working as part of the childcare teams, this role involves providing care and support to children and young people mornings, evenings and weekends being a child or young person's Keyworker and some management responsibility.

£22,227 - £25,172 - 41 hours per week,
(including late/early shifts and weekends) **All Year Round**

TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS – Residential Care

As part of the childcare team, these roles involve providing care and support to the children and young people in childcare teams mornings, evenings and weekends. These roles are aimed at candidates with some experience of Care work.

£14,013 - £14,880 plus 10% per annum - 41 hours per week,
(including weekends) – **Term time only**, plus 2 weeks *

CHILDCARE SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

As part of the childcare teams, these roles involve providing care and support to the children and young people mornings, evenings and weekends. No experience required, full training will be given.

£11,286 - £11,784 plus 10% per annum – 36.5 hours per week, (including weekends – more hours available) – **Term time only,**
plus 2 weeks*

FLEXIBANK TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS

To provide additional support a cover within either the classrooms or residences.

Flexi-bank - £7.26 per hour – **When required** (up to 41 hours per week including split shifts and weekends)

COOK

To provide healthy meals for pupils and staff

£10,417 - £11,296, 28 hours per week: Mon, 10.00 a.m. – 5.30 p.m.,
Tue – Thurs, 12.30 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.

& Sun 8.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m. Term Time Only, plus two weeks*

DOMESTIC ASSISTANTS

To undertake general cleaning duties and maintain an acceptable standard of cleanliness and hygiene at Bradstow

£8,052 - £8,317 per annum – 27.5 hours per week, 7.30 am – 12.30 am Mon-Fri,
- Term time only, plus two weeks*

£4,394 - £4537 per annum – 15 hours per week, 4 pm – 7 pm Mon-Fri,
- Term time only, plus two weeks*

***For these roles there will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid.**

For all posts we look for candidates who are mature, warm, creative and open to learning with a patient and caring attitude to deal sensitively with vulnerable children.

We are committed to sustainability and preserving the environment and therefore encourage applications by email, so for an application form and information pack please email personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk. Or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is 5pm, Thursday 12th June 2014.

Abbey Court School

"We grow people"

Abbey Court School provides a stimulating, challenging and safe learning environment where pupils and staff efforts, work and achievement are celebrated.

We are currently looking for a…

Teacher for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties to commence September 2014

MPS/UPS + SEN + TLR 2C £2,561
(TLR with previous experience)

Abbey Court School is currently located in pleasant surroundings on 2 sites; Rainham (Nursery & Primary) and Strood (Secondary & Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 3-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties. The school has educational resources of enviable proportions and has been judged 'outstanding' in the last 2 Ofsted inspections. This post would suit newly qualified teachers, or those wishing to gain further experience of SEN. Comprehensive induction and training will be provided. Telephone enquiries and informal visits to the school welcomed

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

Closing Date: 6th June 2014
Interviews: 20th June 2014

For further details and a job description, please contact Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP (01634 338236), stating the position for which you are applying.

To advertise in this section
01303 817056

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on 01635 517013 or apply online
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Northgate Fiat Canterbury

Experienced Technician Required

Here at Northgate Fiat in Canterbury we are currently recruiting for an experienced technician to join our busy team.

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate previous experience in a similar role within the motor trade, although experience working with the Fiat brand specifically is not essential. A clean driving licence is essential, as is the ability to fit in with our current team and to work on your own initiative when required.

A competitive remuneration package awaits the right candidate. If you think you have the necessary qualities for this position please forward your CV to andy.erridge@northgate-fiat.co.uk

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Spencer PRIVATE HOSPITALS

Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEQM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in a vacancy for the following staff:

PA to Hospital Manager – Margate
Part time Hours: 30 per week Closing date: 6/06/2014
Salary: £18,667.74 pro rata per annum

Qualifications
- Maths and English GCSE A-C or equivalent
- 2 years' experience working within an administrative environment
- Word/Excel, IT skills, E-mail, Internet

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:
Lynn Orrin, Hospital Manager via Main Reception, on 01843 234555

For a job description and application form please visit
www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Jo Wright, Senior HR Assistant
Telephone: 01304 245961
E-mail: joanne.wright@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospital is an equal opportunity employer.
This position is subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.

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Spencer PRIVATE HOSPITALS

Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEQM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancy for the following staff:

Digital Marketing Assistant – Dover
Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Closing date: 12/06/2014
Salary: £18,000 - £20,000 per annum

Qualifications
- Maths and English GCSE A-C or equivalent
- 1 years' marketing experience
- Marketing qualification
- Social media, SEO and PPC experience essential

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:
Justine Whittle, Marketing Assistant, on 01304 245951

For a job description and application form please visit
www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Jo Wright, Senior HR Assistant
Telephone: 01304 245961
E-mail: joanne.wright@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospital is an equal opportunity employer.
This position is subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.

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MidKent College

Westlands School
Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne,
Kent ME10 1PF

Swale Academies Trust

SITE MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN/CARETAKER
Required as soon as possible

£14,526 - £16,468 - 37 hours a week

The successful applicant will work as a member of the Site Maintenance team, line-managed by the Site Manager. As well as general caretaking duties, they will be expected to undertake site maintenance.

A working knowledge and experience of carpentry, electrics, plumbing and decorating would be desirable.

Applicants should be flexible over start and finish times. Shifts will be between the hours of 5.30 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Extra payments will be made to cover any out-of-hours lettings during evenings and weekends and for weekend/ Bank Holiday standby duty, all of which are carried out on a mandatory, shared rota basis.

Recruitment packs with full details are available from Westlands School or online; (www.westlands.org.uk).

An application form and covering letter detailing how you meet the person specification should be provided.

Please note, we cannot accept CVs alone. No agencies.

Closing date: Wednesday 18 June 14 (noon)

Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Contact details telephone 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461

Email swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr S Cox MA. Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA

Swale Academies Trust Company No 7344732
Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JS

Maths & Computing · Science

To place your notice here, call the Kent Public Notice team on 01303 817056

LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Sections 15 and 16 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011:-

1. from 27 June to 24 July 2014 on Mondays to Fridays inclusive between 9am and 4pm any person interested on application to the Interim Finance Director, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1RS may inspect and make copies of the accounts of the Council for the year ended 31 March 2014 and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating thereto; and

2. on or after 25 July 2014 until the completion of the audit, the District Auditor, Darren Wells, Grant Thornton, The Explorer Building, Fleming Way, Crawley, RN10 9GT at the request of any local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate, will give the elector or their representative an opportunity to question him about the accounts, and any such elector or representative may attend before the Auditor and make objection to any of the accounts. No objection shall be made by or on behalf of a local government elector unless the District Auditor has previously received written notice of the proposed objection and of the grounds on which it is to be made. Where an elector sends a notice to the Auditor for this purpose they shall at the same time send a copy of the notice to the Council.

Lee M. Colyer CPFA
Interim Finance Director (s151 Officer)
Town Hall
Royal Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN1 1RS

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

PLANNING

Folkestone Hythe & Romney Marsh Shepway District Council

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y14/0600/SH - Lambourne Lympne Castle The Street Lympne Hythe Kent - Display of an externally illuminated sign of fret cut letters over outbuilding entrance doors

Y14/0494/SH† - 4 St Marys Cottages St Marys Road West Hythe Hythe Kent - Application for single storey front extension and part two storey/part single storey rear extension

Y14/0608/SH - Flat 6 Belvedere Court 12 Trinity Crescent Folkestone Kent CT20 2ET - Retrospective planning application for replacement UPVC windows

Y14/0631/SH - 13 Hillside Street Hythe Kent CT21 5EQ - Works to trees situated within a conservation area comprising: felling of an Apple Tree to ground level, and overall crown reduction and reshape of three Bays and a Conifer

Y14/0640/SH - Magpie Cottage Frogholt Frogholt Folkestone Kent - Works to trees situated within a conservation area comprising felling of three Sycamore and reduction of a Beech by one third, followed by the planting of replacement trees

Y14/0594/SH - Rh & Dr Dungeness Station Dungeness Road Dungeness New Romney Kent - Erection of a timber building with ramp in the car park of the station (relocation from existing location) for use for cycle hire in association with the railway use.

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to planning@shepway.gov.uk. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

† - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/.

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning
Shepway District Council

To advertise in this section
01303 817056

LICENSING ACT 2003:
Application for Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that the Westgate Community Trust (Canterbury) Ltd has applied to Canterbury City Council for the GRANT of a Premises Licence to operate the following Regulated Activities: Plays, films, indoor sporting events, boxing or wrestling, live and recorded music, performance of dance, anything of a similar description, and the sale of alcohol both on and off the premises, between 09.00 and 24.00hrs every day; Late Night Refreshment between 23.00 and 01.00hrs, every day; with one extra hour at the end of the day on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the two May Bank Holidays, the August Bank Holiday, Boxing Day and to celebrate St. George's, St. Andrew's, St. David's, St. Patrick's, St. Valentine's, Halloween and Guy Fawkes. On New Year's Eve: to continue from the end of trading until the beginning of trading on New Year's Day; all at the following premises: Westgate Hall, Westgate Hall Road, Canterbury.

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at www.canterbury.gov.uk/licensing or at Council Offices, Military Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YW tel. 01227 862000 by appointment with the Licensing Team between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday. Any person wishing to submit representations to this application must give notice in writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection by 25/06/2014. The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that their identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Sub Committee and will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011
Additional Information provided

Appeal by East Kent Opportunities and Rose Farm Estates PLC

Relating to the application to Thanet District Council

For application for outline permission for mixed use development for up to 550 dwellings; up to 63,000 sq m of class B1 business floorspace; car showroom; a new local centre comprising up to 2,000 sq m convenience retail (class A1, A2, A3), community facilities (up to 5,000 sq m) (class D1/D2) and community healthcare up to 1,200 sq m (class D1); and associated highway works with all matters reserved

At Land at New Haine Road, Ramsgate, CT12

A copy of the updated Non Technical Summary to the Environmental Statement will be available for review for a period of 21 days form the date of this notice at:

Thanet District Council
Cecil Street, Margate CT9 1XQ

Representations on these documents should be made directly to The Planning Inspectorate using the contact details below:

Planning Inspectorate Reference: APP/Z2260/A/14/2213265

Contact point at the Planning Inspectorate:
Robert Laurie Wordsworth, 3/26, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN
Tel: 0303 444 5608

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Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

14/01572/FULL Benenden Girls School Cranbrook Road, Benenden
- Installation of horizontal timber cladding to brickwork elevations of theatre building (LB)

14/01516/HOUSE Brenchley Manor Brenchley Road, Brenchley
- Extension to replace existing store, new entrance and porch; Various internal alterations (CA) (LB)

14/01517/LBC Brenchley Manor Brenchley Road, Brenchley
- Listed Building Consent - Extension to replace existing store, new entrance and porch; Various internal alterations (LB)

14/01515/LBC Oast House At Park Farm, Capel
- Listed Building Consent: Conversion of oast house to detached dwelling - amendments to balcony balustrade and rail to be made of treated soft wood. Omission of staircase from west elevation (TW/11/03569 refers) (LB)

14/01548/LBC Barn Branden, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst
- Listed Building Consent: Repairs and refurbishment to listed barn (works commenced) (LB)

14/01562/HOUSE Paley Farm Paley Lane, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst
- Re-instatement of previously demolished chimney stack on east side (LB)

14/01569/LBC Paley Farm Paley Lane, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst
- Listed Building Consent - Re-instatement of previously demolished chimney stack on east side (LB)

14/01469/FULL Trinity Theatre & Arts Association Church Road, Culverden
- Retrospective: Hardstanding patio area in rear garden (CA) (LB)

14/01534/LBC 83 London Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Culverden
- Listed Building Consent - Installation of satellite dish (LB)

13/02828/FULMJ Land To West Of Lorenden Park And The White House, Hawkhurst
- Residential development comprising 62 dwellings, access, parking, garages and car barns, hard and soft landscaping for Countryside Properties (MAJOR) (DEVPLN)

14/01537/FULL Ashmount Rye Road, Hawkhurst
- Proposed dwelling at rear of existing garden (CA) (LB)

14/01527/FULL Burns Guthrie & Partners 11 Calverley Park, Park
- Change of use of existing premises from A2 to C3a, demolition of two storey extension to north east and construction of new, single storey extension to north. Construction of detached garage (CA) (LB)

14/01528/LBC Burns Guthrie & Partners 11 Calverley Park, Park
- Listed Building Consent: Change of use of existing premises from A2 to C3a, demolition of two storey extension to north east and construction of new, single storey extension to north. Construction of detached garage (LB)

14/01565/HOUSE 5 Lower Green Road Pembury, Pembury
- Demolition of rear utility room and construct a glazed single-storey structure at rear (CA) (LB)

14/01566/LBC 5 Lower Green Road Pembury, Pembury
- Listed Building Consent - Demolition of rear utility room and construct a glazed single-storey structure at rear (LB)

14/01582/FULL Sparshatts Of Kent Ltd Longfield Road, Sherwood
- Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a mixed sui generis/Class B2 use consisting of car showroom, MOT testing centre, servicing, and vehicle repairs with associated car display, parking spaces and means of access (MAJOR)

14/01568/LBC David Salomons Estate & Mill Farm Broomhill Road, Southborough Town Council
- Listed Building Consent - Creation of temporary Christmas attraction within the grounds of Salomons Estate, including the installation of a number of temporary buildings and structures, demolition of brick enclosure adjacent to boundary wall and reinstatement of gap in wall, change of use of land at Mill Farm to temporary car park for the attraction including new surfacing for parking area, and erection of temporary structures (LB)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

James Freeman
Head of Planning Services,
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS
Dated: 31 May 2014

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Swale BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Swale Borough Council as Local Planning Authority has received the following applications which are being advertised to ascertain the views of persons living near the sites and other interested parties. The proposed developments relate to one or more of the following:

1. The site of the application is within/affecting a designated Conservation Area (Section 73) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
2. The proposed development may affect the Listed Building or it's setting.
3. The application is for a Major Development.
4. The application would affect a right of way to which Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) applies.
6. This application may be of wider public interest.
7. This application would affect Trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order.
8. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

REPRESENTATIONS IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS MUST BE MADE BY 16 JUNE 2014.

SW/14/0259:
Listed Building Consent for general refurbishment and conservation repair to existing building, including additional two bathrooms, upgrade of two bathrooms and kitchen and associated services – Eastling Manor, Kettle Hill Road, EASTLING; **REASONS 1 & 2**

SW/14/0510:
Proposed removal of two existing dormers and building one dormer with roof bungalow – 55 Seathorpe Avenue, MINSTER; **REASON 4**

SW/14/0514:
Change of use from estate agent to a taxi office (Retrospective) – 28 High Street, SHEERNESS; **REASON 4**

SW/14/0548:
Alteration of site access, provision of access track and turning head and construction of two pole barns – Land at Vicarage Lane, OSPRINGE; **REASONS 1,2,3 & 4**

SW/14/0558:
Change of use from workshop/storage unit to ancillary public house cellar (use class A4) – Rear 32 High Street, SHEERNESS; **REASON 1**

SW/14/0561:
Change of use 7 caravans for use as staff/warden's accommodation – Ashcroft Coast Holiday Park, Plough Road, MINSTER; **REASONS 2 & 3**

SW/14/0562:
Change of use of 7 no. caravans for use as staff/warden's accommodation – Warden Springs Caravan Park, Thorn Hill Road, WARDEN; **REASONS 2, 3 & 7**

SW/14/0563:
Demolition of redundant and dilapidated commercial buildings/units and replace with eight x two bedroom flats with parking, access and amenity space – Rear of 119-129 High Street, Milton Regis, SITTINGBOURNE; **REASONS 1 & 2**

SW/14/0569:
Change of use of 7 caravans for use as staff/warden's accommodation – Shurland Dale Holiday Park, Warden Road, EASTCHURCH; **REASON 3**

SW/14/0577:
Development of Neatscourt Phase 2C to deliver B1/B2 and A1/A3 floorspace. Reorganisation of share car park and landscaping areas with retail terrace – Land West of A249, (Phase 2C of Neatscourt Development), QUEENBOROUGH; **REASON 3**

SW/14/0585:
Lawful Development Certificate for use as a single dwelling house (Existing) – The Stables, New Orchard Farm, RODMERSHAM; **REASON 6**

Particulars of the proposal(s) can be obtained from Planning Services, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, where copies of the applications and all documents submitted with them may be inspected during office hours; any representations should be made in writing to this address.

James Freeman
Head of Planning

Call 01895 83 33 33
for bookings and information

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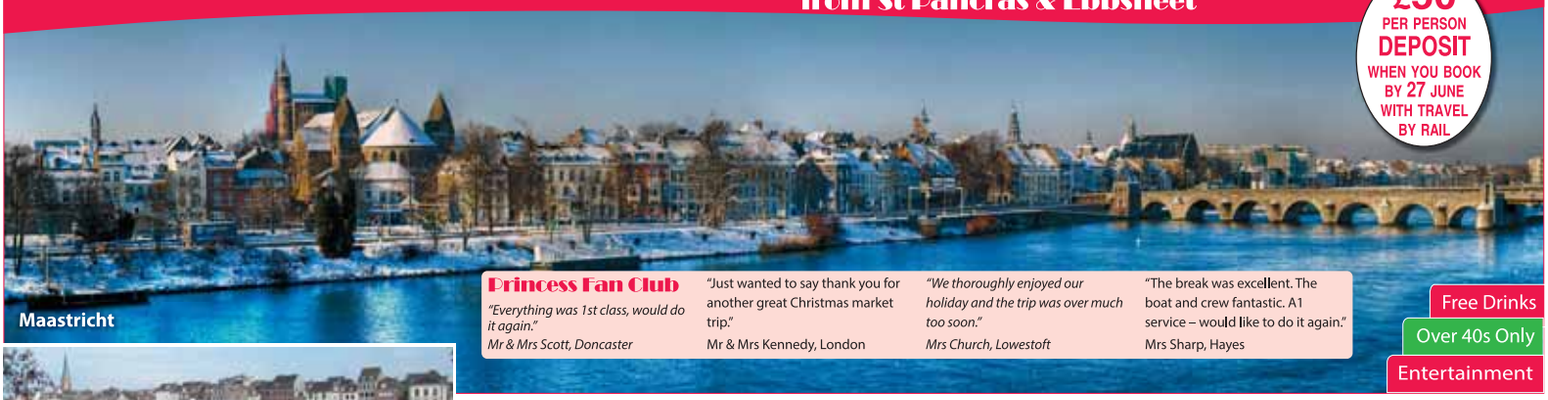

Maastricht

Princess Fan Club

"Everything was 1st class, would do it again."
Mr & Mrs Scott, Doncaster

"Just wanted to say thank you for another great Christmas market trip."
Mr & Mrs Kennedy, London

"We thoroughly enjoyed our holiday and the trip was over much too soon."
Mrs Church, Lowestoft

"The break was excellent. The boat and crew fantastic. A1 service – would like to do it again."
Mrs Sharp, Hayes

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Main deck cabin

Pirate night on board

GN Voyages is exclusively chartering the mps Princess again to bring you a great selection of river cruises. She will deliver us to a host of must-see destinations with good food, great hospitality and plenty of fun along the way served up by the crew and our team on board.

Affectionately nicknamed *'the ugly duckling'* here at GN, the mps Princess has a very fine interior indeed accommodating just 100 guests in comfort and style. There is a cosy lounge-bar, and a modern restaurant with buffet and table service - both have panoramic views. Dinner is a real highlight with 4 courses served at your table each night. At the Captain's Dinner enjoy 5 courses.

Three cabin grades are available - main deck rear, main deck, and promenade deck - all are outside with window, two single beds, private facilities, TV, telephone and heating. All the decks - main, promenade and sundeck are accessible by stairs or stairlift. The large sundeck has chairs for all guests and a large canopy.

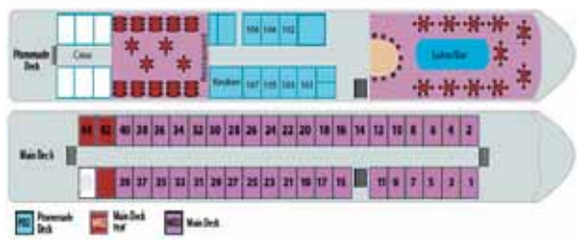
Semi-All-Inclusive

Almost everything on board is included: beer, wine by the glass, Dutch spirits & soft drinks served at lunch & dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar. PLUS: buffet breakfast & lunch; morning & afternoon tea/coffee & cakes; dinner served at your table and late night snacks.

Travel to the Princess

Travel is by mid-morning Eurostar from St Pancras and Ebbsfleet to Brussels - journey time is around 2 hours. We then take you to the Princess by coach, either directly, or with an interesting visit en route - see individual cruise itinerary. The journey home is just as easy.

*Note: For the Rhine cruise we continue from Brussels by train to Cologne, or you can fly from Gatwick. In November and December some Eurostar trains are to or from Lille.



All cruises include

- Return Eurostar rail travel from London St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Brussels (*Rhine in Flames also by air from Gatwick)
- Semi-all-inclusive cruise on the mps Princess
- Main Deck rear, outside, twin bed cabin with private facilities (grade MR2). No single cabins available
- Entertainment
- Transfers abroad

Rhine in Flames River Cruise

5 days semi-all-inclusive 2 October, 2014

FROM £649PP
Quote RH10-K0S

This fun-packed cruise visits historic riverside towns including **Andernach**, **Rudesheim**, **Koblenz** and **Boppard**, where you'll see the Rhine in Flames festival. Originally held to celebrate the grape harvest, this spectacular pyrotechnics show features an illuminated flotilla of riverboats and curtains of fire, bathing the scene in a magical glow.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Return rail travel from London St Pancras and Ebbsfleet to Cologne or flights with luggage from Gatwick - supp't may apply • 4-night semi all inclusive cruise sharing a twin bed rear outside cabin with private facilities & TV - upgrades available • Entertainment • Embarkation & departure transfers

The Rhine in Flames festival

Belgium, Holland & Valkenburg Christmas Party

4 days semi-all-inclusive 21 November, 2014

FROM £379PP
Quote PC11-3-K0S

Join us for a relaxing river cruise taking-in: **Valkenburg**, with its unique Christmas Market Caves; **Hasselt**, a charming Belgian town with a festive Winterland; **Maastricht**, home of world famous musician Andre Rieu; and **Brussels**, the Belgian capital. PLUS an optional visit to **Aachen** Christmas Market and the Lindt Chocolate Factory outlet in Germany.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad • Return rail travel from London St Pancras and Ebbsfleet to Brussels or return flights with luggage from Gatwick to Brussels • 3-night semi all inclusive cruise sharing a twin bed rear outside cabin with private facilities & TV - upgrades available • Entertainment • Embarkation & departure transfers

Hasselt Winter Wonderland

Bruges & Valkenburg Christmas Markets

5 days semi-all-inclusive 24 November, 2014

FROM £479PP
Quote PC11-4-K0S

Join us for a relaxing river cruise taking-in: **Valkenburg** with its unique Christmas Market Caves; **Maastricht**, capital of the Dutch province of Limburg and home of world famous musician Andre Rieu; **Antwerp**, Belgium's second largest city; **Ypres**, home to the Flanders in Fields Museum and the Menin Gate, both synonymous with WW1 history; and beautiful **Bruges** with its wonderful festive atmosphere and markets.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad • Return rail travel from London St Pancras and Ebbsfleet to Brussels • 4-night semi all inclusive cruise sharing a twin bed rear cabin with private facilities & TV - upgrades available • Entertainment • Embarkation & departure transfers

Valkenburg Christmas Market Caves

Christmas Markets Spectacular

4 days semi-all-inclusive 28 November & 1 December, 2014

FROM £379PP
Quote PC11-5/PC12-1-K0S

Join us for a fun-packed river cruise taking-in four great Christmas Markets. In **Lille**, Northern France, the main square is transformed into a winter wonderland; **Bruges** wonderful festive market is just a short stroll from the ship's mooring; **Ypres** has a small Christmas market and you'll also be able to visit the Flanders in Fields Museum and the Menin Gate, both synonymous with WW1 history. The **Brussels** Christmas Market is hailed as 'Europe's most original'.

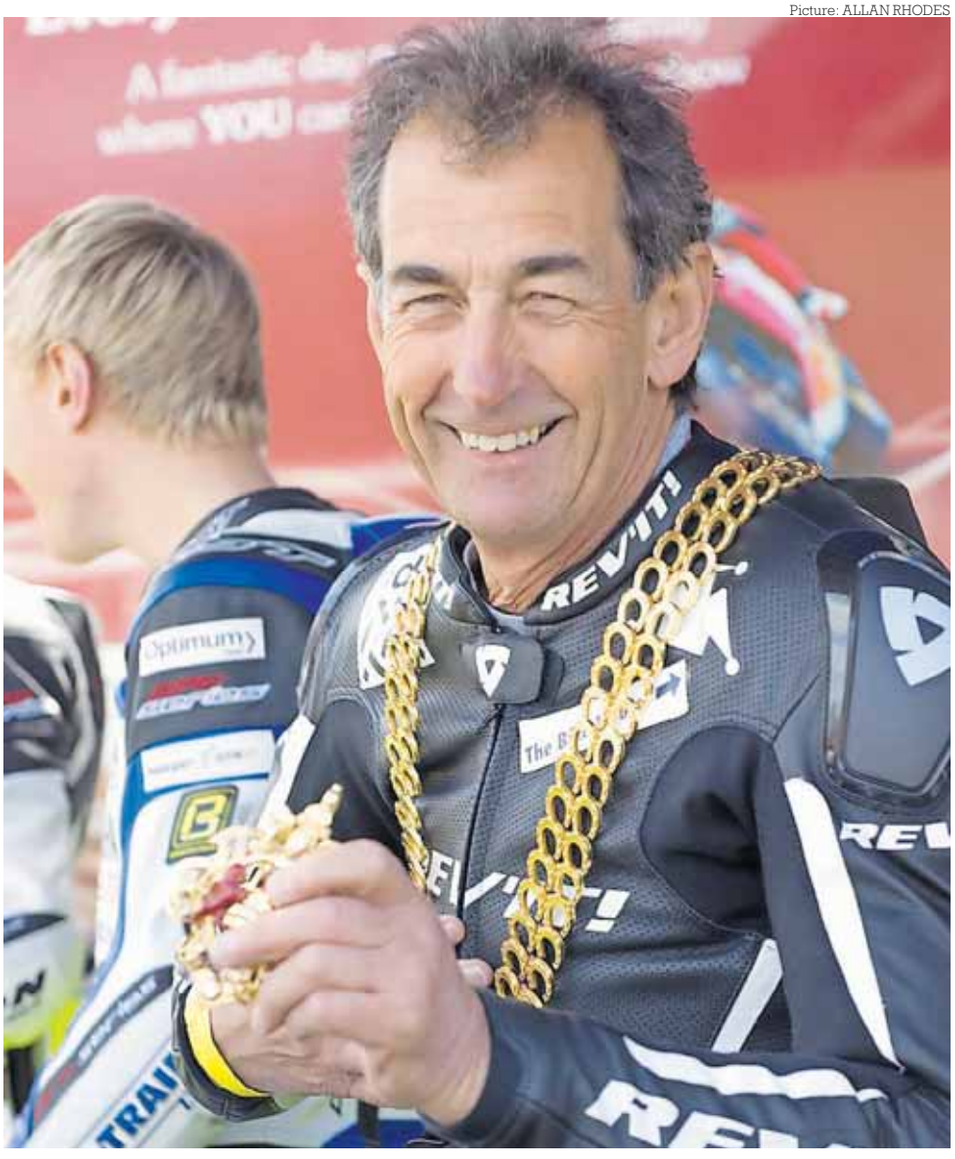
INCLUDED: Escorted throughout abroad • Return rail travel from London St Pancras and Ebbsfleet to Brussels/Lille • 3-night semi all inclusive cruise sharing a rear outside twin bed cabin with private facilities and TV – upgrades available • Entertainment • Embarkation & departure transfers

Festive Bruges

Legend embarks on madcap journey down memory lane

He raced during a time when danger lurked around every corner, but for Steve Parrish sport was all about fun, as his UK tour is revealing, writes **Chris Murphy**

Picture: ALLAN RHODES



MOTORCYCLING and truck-racing legend Steve Parrish knows a thing or two about raising a smile, but not everyone always appreciates his practical jokes.

He remains banned from Macau, China, after blowing up a brothel with firecrackers while some racing friends were, erm, inside.

He also once posed as a doctor to allow racing pal John Hopkins to fly from Japan to the Australian Grand Prix.

He has plenty of other tales to tell, too, and is divulging many of them during a national tour that is making two stops in the county.

For example, there was his unorthodox training regime in the 70s, with world-champion motorcyclist Barry Sheene, plus girlfriends, spending one January waterskiing and eating fish in Venezuela.

Parrish has long enjoyed being offbeat. His cars have the number plates PEN15 and 60CK... "to stop my wife driving my them".

Other antics included setting fire to toilets in Poland; secretly qualifying for team-mate Sheene, who had a hangover; and using his fire engine to soak a friend's pub customers.

Taking a break from commentating on the 2014 TT practice sessions, he told us about his tour: "I will be talking about some of those things – it really was quite a laugh back then.

"I will also be mentioning the time I was asked to drive some dignitaries around Donington in a bus and was going fast enough to spill toilet water over the circuit – just before the British Grand Prix.

"The MAD tour, as it's called, is about the mad things that went on back then.

"Of course, drivers and riders are not allowed to do those sorts of things any more. Lewis Hamilton doesn't get into any trouble like that because he'd probably be fired.

"Nowadays, sportsmen have to be clinically clean. They just can't have the fun we did back then because the sport is so sanitised.

"I feel for them, really – I don't feel for their bank balances.

> **"My audiences can be assured of some fun. You won't get that in 20 years' time because today's sportsmen won't have anything to talk about."**
>
> **Steve Parrish,** on what to expect from his UK tour

"But I do feel for the fact they are just doing what they do as a job. My career wasn't – mine was a hobby that let me scrap through and have a lot of fun doing it."

Parrish was born near Cambridge in 1953 and, of course, had to set up home on the Isle of Man, renowned for the ultra-dangerous and spectacular TT Races.

On two wheels, he turned professional at the age of 22 in 1976, going on to win the ACU Solo title in the British Motor Cycle Championship.

Teaming up with the equally legendary and now late Barry Sheene on a Suzuki, he competed in the 1977 500cc world championship.

Parrish finished fifth in standings before returning to British-based riding to become the 1978 500cc British champion. He also won the Shell 500 title in both 1979 and 1980 and a superbike title in 1981.

Having enough of competitive two-wheel competition, he turned to another form of motorsport: the more unusual arena of truck-racing.

Taking the wheel of these behemoths of the circuit in 1986, he won the 1987 British Open Truck Racing Championship.

He also took both the European and British Truck Racing championship titles in 1990, then held the British title for four years.

As if that was not enough, his prowess behind the wheel saw him retain the European title for three years driving for the BP-Mercedes Benz team.

Parrish regained the prestigious European crown in 1996 in Jarama, Spain.

The most successful truck-racer ever, he retired in 2002, aged 47.

Despite the trucking triumphs, he did not turn his back on bikes and was team manager for the UK Yamaha factory race team from 1987-91, taking three British Superbike championship titles, in 1987, 1989 and 1990.

Having finally hung up up his race suit once and for all, Parrish's knowledge of the sports he loved, together with his jovial character, meant he was at home behind a microphone.

He had already been commentating, from 1985, for BBC radio, before joining Sky television to commentate on superbike races with Barry Nutley.

He moved to the BBC in 1990 to commentate on the British 125 Championship, before transferring to the BBC's Moto GP coverage, undertaken with Charlie Cox.

The pair had a genuine rapport and commentated on series for the BBC from the late 1990s, including British Touring Cars, British and World Superbikes and MotoGP.

A qualified pilot, Parrish was also a commentator for the Red Bull Air Race series for Channel 4.

His skills means he is sometimes called as an expert to assess racing accidents, while he holds the Guinness Book Of Records world record for driving backwards the fastest, hitting 105mph in a Caterham car.

He told us: "One thing my audiences can be assured of is some fun.

"You won't get that in 20 years' time because today's sportsmen won't have anything to talk about.

"Well, apart from their results, which seem to be the only thing that matters to them. And people will have seen and read all about them anyway. I like to see people laughing and smiling – and that is what the MAD tour is all about."

There will be short periods for the audience to ask questions, but the truncated timescale is just to make sure they are not boring ones, said Parrish, who is joined on stage by daughter Frankie.

Oh yes... MAD stands for 'My Adolescent Dad', apparently.

Parrish said: "We do take four or five questions from the floor, and you never know what you are going to get.

"There could be things I have forgotten that someone knows about and think it's funny to bring up – they are the ones that embarrass my daughter!

"I do have to be careful because sometimes they can be boring, but thankfully that is rare.

"My nights are about the funny things that go on."

Like the room filled with live frogs

FUN TIMES: Steve Parrish enjoyed good laughs with friend and former world champion Barry Sheene, below left

or jumping a hire car out of a Daytona car park on to the beach.

Having said that, Parrish is painfully aware that he grew up at a time when racing-drivers and riders had a horrifyingly short lifespan.

He said: "There is a serious time during the talks, too – you can't get away from it.

"There were periods when I lost lots of friends racing, so it is a mixture, really. It was a time when the sport really did earn its 'motor-racing is dangerous' tag.

"Yeah, we do call it the good old days, but it was hugely dangerous. And I think that is probably why we made sure we also had a lot of fun.

"It was like a war zone at times – you really didn't know who was going to be going home at the end of a race weekend.

"There are still times today that it really comes home to you how dangerous the sport it.

"I am working out there at the TT at the moment and it is sad to say this is still hugely dangerous.

"And that's what happened a few weeks ago when Simon Andrews crashed at the North West 200."

Andrews was involved in a two-bike crash at the track in Northern Ireland and died within days at Belfast hospital.

During practice at the same event, French rider Franck Petricola was left with critical injuries but is slowly recovering.

Parrish said: "Road-racing is as dangerous as it ever was. The difference these days is that you choose to go road-racing – when I did it, it was part of the Grand Prix, so you were obliged to do it if you wanted to chase a world championship.

> **"Road-racing is as dangerous as it ever was. The difference now is that you choose to go road-racing – when I did it, it was part of the Grand Prix"**
>
> **Steve Parrish,** on changing times in motorsport

"Nowadays, you opt to do this sort of racing in the same way that you opt to climb Everest or go potholing.

"It has been quite a few years that the TT has been run without a death. It happens because the roads are so dangerous, but you get a lot of competitors doing a lot of miles, so pro rata it is not as bad as it looks.

"I know that sounds stupid, but a TT race is 225 miles whereas a circuit race is normally 50 miles long.

"So it is a long endurance and you start with 80 competitors as opposed to 25 in a Grand Prix.

"But the atmosphere here is brilliant. There will be barbecues and beers – that doesn't happen in Grand Prix racing."

One of the biggest jokes he was involved in was when the 80s TV show Beadle's About! set him up.

Parrish said: "It was 26 years ago. A consortium of friends got together and played this amazing joke on me."

Jeremy Beadle, who died in 2008, and his TV crew set up a fake Nato exercise near Parrish's home.

He told us: "They staged it so it looked like they were blowing up my workshops with bombs and mortars.

"There were anti-aircraft guns on my driveway.

"It really did look like we were under attack, with explosions in the fields, and then my workshops blew up.

"I was just left standing there shouting and screaming, as you would do – they got me hook, line and sinker."

It has certainly been a bizarre life for Parrish.

Sheene once said of him: "If he was to set up his bike as well as his victims, and had put as much effort into the bike as he did the intricate pranks he pulled on people, he would certainly have been a world champion."

■ **For tickets and details about the MAD tour appearance at The Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on Sunday, June 15, visit orchardtheatre.co.uk or phone the ticket office on 01322 220000. And for the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone, visit on Thursday, September 18, phone 01622 758611.**

Sport Shorts

» Email **sports@kosmedia.co.uk** or call **Dave Mairs** on **01303 817022**

Edwards and Beaumont ease Kent women to huge victory

CHARLOTTE Edwards played a captain's innings of 100 not out as Kent's women maintained their unbeaten record this season with an astonishing 10-wicket victory over Warwickshire at The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence, on Sunday.

Warwickshire were dismissed for 158 in the Royal London Women's Championship 50-over clash at Canterbury, a score that might have posed some problems for the home side.

However, Edwards's unbeaten ton and 50 not out from Tamsin Beaumont ensured there were never any worries and Kent cruised home in their only fixture scheduled for The Spitfire Ground this summer.

The win follows the 173-run crushing of Yorkshire at Upchurch CC and 34-run triumph over Middlesex at Edmonton CC.

TON: Charlotte Edwards

TRICKY TRED: James Tredwell

Tredwell has Sri Lankans all of a spin

KENT off-spinner James Tredwell has had a topsy-turvy week with England in the ODI series against Sri Lanka.

On Sunday, he was involved in a shocking 157-run defeat, returning unremarkable figures of 1-57 from his 10 overs at Chester-le-Street as Sri Lanka compiled 256-8 from 50 overs before dismissing England for a risible 99.

However, it was a complete turnaround at Old Trafford on Wednesday when England bowled out the visitors for 67.

'Tricky Treddy' was at his bamboozling best and took two wickets for just two runs from his three overs.

The win put England 2-1 ahead.

Gills Ladies miss out on the title

IT was final-fixture despair for Gillingham Ladies, who lost out on the FA Women's Premier League Southern Division title courtesy of Coventry City Ladies' 1-0 win at Portsmouth on Sunday.

Coventry's eighth-minute strike meant the title went to the West Midlands rather than to Medway.

Rain is winner at Tunbridge Wells

KENT'S LV= County Championship match against Worcestershire at Tunbridge Wells this week was ruined by the weather and the match finished in a frustrating draw.

Kent hit 258 all out before the visitors reached 67-0 in reply.

Kent took seven points and Worcestershire eight.

Hundreds take on Folkestone 10K

THIS year's Folkestone Coastal 10K run on Sunday drew more than 600 registrations and ideal conditions.

Adrian Mussett, of Colchester Harriers, finished first in a time of 0:32:44, while Sarah Gruber, of Sittingbourne Striders, was first lady home, in 0:40:22.

All money raised goes to charity.

Dover Athletic squad is taking shape

DOVER Athletic have confirmed their retained list for the 2014-15 season.

Players already under contract for next season are goalkeeper Mitch Walker, defenders Sean Raggett and Tom Wynter, midfielder Tom Murphy and striker Jeff Goulding.

In addition, Richard Orlu, Chris Kinnear Jr and Ricky Modeste have signed new contracts.

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